

Philophobia

by ADAMalchemist

Category: How to Train Your Dragon, Rise of the Guardians

Genre: Hurt-Comfort, Romance

Language: English

Characters: Hiccup, Jack Frost

Status: Completed

Published: 2013-05-31 17:50:30

Updated: 2014-10-29 03:13:08

Packaged: 2016-04-26 15:13:33

Rating: M

Chapters: 32

Words: 83,418

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: 'He knew it was going to be a bad day from the moment he woke up, slipped on the sweatshirt in an angry manner, and looked in the mirror. "Another day in paradise." ' HiccupxJack or Frostcup as others call it. Modern AU. Not very good at summaries.

1. Friends

A/N: Hello. I don't know what to say other than this is my first crossover yaoi pairing fic. I've recently come into contact with the pairing Frostcup and decently liked it. So, yeah. This is the product of my strangeness. It'll start off slow like this at first, but, if enough people like it, I'll continue. I don't own HTTYD or ROTG. Warning for crappy writing.

* * *

><p>"How has your day been?"<p>

To anyone, this would be completely pathetic. But, honestly, it's the most normal thing he has ever done. From the time he was born, he had noticed how social humans were to one another. How the kids on the playground would walk up to complete strangers and introduce themselves. All except for him; whom everyone avoided as if he were an incurable disease.

So, being human like the rest of the children, he decided he needed someone to talk to other than his plush dragon toy. He had tried to talk to the toy once before and his father worried for the boy's mental health. Instead, he began talking to a bird.

The bird wasn't all that cute and it didn't talk back, but, it was living, breathing, and willing to listen it seemed. That is, until it flew away at the feeling of the child's warm breath. He sighed and hugged his toy dragon, watching as his last chance of making a friend flew up into the darkened clouds. Silently, he relaxed into his

overly puffed coat and his face almost disappeared. The thick snow on the ground began soaking the boy's pants, yet, he still didn't get up. No, it was too embarrassing to even try. He'd rather hide in his giant coat than go sit on the bench and be seen by the other children, setting himself as an easy bully target.

He had tried many times before to find a friend; someone to talk to and come home with to watch television or play board games. But, as soon as he approached another human, they brushed him off and called him by a term he knew as 'mistake', 'runt'. There were times he, and at times his father, thought of him as a mistake. And there were occasions where he could be considered the runt of the litter.

The term stuck to him like a slug's slim on the road and, after a while, he began to forget his real name.

Footsteps quietly approached him, making him bit his bottom lip in fear that it was a bully. His buck teeth cut into his chin and his eyes closed tightly as the footsteps stopped right in front of him. He could feel himself shaking and at that moment, he wished he was a turtle. A turtle with a small shell so nobody would be able to notice him in this snow. He began to press himself further into his coat, bracing for the worst when â€

"I like your dragon."

What? Had he just heard that correctly? Slowly, he lifted his head up to stare at the owner of the strange comment. He smiled at the small boy, brown eyes twinkling happily. This child, he hardly had anything on! A pair of shorts, a sweatshirt; where were his parents? He held out a hand to the wannabe turtle.

"Do you wanna go play?" He asked, pulling the grape flavored lollipop out of his mouth.

Who was he? Did he know anything about him? Was this a trick someone was playing on him? He raised an eyebrow at the brunette, hesitantly taking his hand. "Okkaayyâ€|what's your name?"

"My names Jack!" He said proudly. "Jackson Overland! What's your name?"

With a tug of the arm, the smaller of the two now stood on both his feet. He rubbed his running nose on his sleeve and shuffled his feet, his forest green eyes staring down at the snow. "H-Hiccup." He said, not as proudly as the other. "Hiccup Horrendous Haddock the third."

"Haddock? Like, the fish?"

Hiccup nodded, trying not to break out in a smile. Mainly, when people heard his full name, they focused on the first one. How the meaning of the term fit him so well and how they could use it against him. Knowing that this child might haven't had heard the term before made him flutter for a moment. "Yeah, like the fish."

"I like fish sticks."

Other children and their parents watched as the two played on the swings, slid down the slides, and climbed back up as best they could.

Little Jackson eventually convinced the fish child to try his strength at the monkey bars. With skinny, noodle arms and small, boney hands, he grabbed a hold of the first bar and hoisted himself up only to fall a second later. The other children laughed and pointed, making Hiccup wish he was back at the base of the tree hiding in his gigantic winter coat. His new friend glared at the others and helped him to his feet. They repeated this process several times before the smaller one finally got the hang of it. And this is where they stayed; talking to each other while hanging off the bars nobody else wanted to touch. They talked about simple things. Pets, birthdays, favorite things to do, favorite things to eat. He learned that the brown-eyed boy was seven, a year older than himself, didn't have any pets, loved playing in the snow, and hot dogs were his meal of choice; covered with mustard and ketchup. The other didn't learn that much about his smaller companion; only that he stuttered, he liked drawing, and French fries with chocolate shakes were amazing together.

He chuckled at the child's attempt hide his face and patted him on the head. In the right light, he could see natural red highlights in his hair. It was stunning and reminded him quickly of falling autumn leaves.

Hiccup trembled under his hand from the cold, looking over at the group of bullies that started making their way toward them.

He had known the group practically since birth and dreaded every moment his father had a business party. Snotlout was the leader of them. His nose stuck up like a pig and his face puffed out as if he had oranges in his cheeks. At the age of four, the brunette proclaimed that the bully's name would be Snotface. When he screamed in anger, it was changed to Snotlout. At first, the child meant to say loud but, due to him having a cold that day, the word accidentally came out as 'lout'.

By his sides were Tuffnut and Ruffnut; twins that constantly had their hands curled into fists and dumb grins on their faces. They received their names after giving him his first black eye and split lip at around five years old.

He sighed as the three pointed and laughed, causing the attention of Jack. "Well, well, well, if it isn't the little mistake." The pig nosed boy said.

Hiccup just stared back for a moment, trying to will his body to move. He opened his mouth but nothing came out. This gave the group something to laugh at before turning to the new face. "Who are you? Don't you know what_ he_ is?"

Jackson shrugged. "He's a kid named after a bodily function. Although, I think he might be a turtle." He looked down to see the boy hiding in his coat. "Are you a turtle?"

"No!" The other whispered, looking into his brown eyes.

With a nod, he turned back to the odd eight year old and tried his hardest to make his nose stick up so he could mock him. "He's not a turtle. He's a kid like all of us."

The twins laughed and began pounding their fists into their hands.

Oh, his head was spinning just thinking about the beating. In a matter of seconds, his eye would be black and the taste of iron would overpower his mouth. He closed his eyes tightly and braced himself for the fists that usually felt strangely like bricks.

"Bah! He's not a kid! He's a runt! A fishbone! A waste!" Snotlout shouted, his chubby finger pointed at the smallest of them all.

Jack glared at the bully and stood between them. "He's my friend and I'll not have you talk about him like that. Now leave us alone!"

He picked up the largest and thickest stick on the ground, advancing toward the small group with a threatening look. The first to run away was Ruffnut, her braids coming undone as she fell onto the snow. Tuffnut wasn't far behind, screaming with flailing limbs. Snotlout let out a threat that they'd be back and ran off with a clearly scared expression. Hiccup slowly allowed his head to pop out, his green eyes looking all around for any other attackers. When he saw his new friend standing there with a large branch that could be considered a small tree, they went wide with amazement. The only other person to stick up for him was his mother and that was hardly ever considering she was around his father much too often. She never meant to be cold toward her son, but, she didn't want to embarrass her husband and the smaller boy understood completely.

He uncurled from his makeshift shell, dragon toy clutched firmly in his hands. "You stood up for me!" He said.

The seven year old nodded with the goofiest smile childhood ever did see. "Well, I like you. I don't want to see you hurt."

And just like that, the two were almost inseparable. After school, Jackson would walk with Hiccup and urge him to stop at the playground. They hardly did. A few times during the nights, the older boy would knock on his friend's window and drag him outside to play. Mostly, they just sat on the swing set and talked or looked up at the stars, trying to find constellations. Those were the moments he liked the most. No expectations, no one to disappoint; just him, Jack, the stars, and the snow. He thought nothing could ruin this.

Two weeks of nearly perfect bliss. Two weeks of sneaking around, climbing out windows, hidden snowball fights. And tonight wouldn't have been different.

He laid in his bed peacefully; eyes closed, breathing steady. If anyone were to walk in, all they'd see is a seemingly sleeping runt and a few toys laying on the floor. What they wouldn't see is the thick clothes he wore and the hat that sat perfectly on his head. His ears were open and they listened for the four taps on the window that came almost every other night. As he waited, he could hear the house breathe as if it were actually alive. Footsteps here and there, the sound of the television shutting off, his father's snoring; even in the dead of night, it was alive.

Tap, tap, tap, tap...

The sound made him jump up and slide into his winter boots. His once peaceful looking face had turned into the goofiest one of all, a grin spanning from ear to ear, his slight buck teeth going over his lower lip. It took everything in little Jackson's power not to burst out

laughing at the sight. With a stumble here and a grunt there, Hiccup climbed out of his bedroom window and ran with his best friend to the park.

On the first night, the smaller one was filled with dread of being found out; that the people living near the playground would call his father. But, after a few days, he found out that they were too far away to wake anyone up. The closest building was the small ice skating rink and activity center which held the day camp during the summer.

As soon as they entered the fire fly lit grounds, the first snowball was thrown. The war started without proper forts. Both children scurried across the fields, finding shelter behind slides and under benches. The younger one was slow and couldn't make enough ammo in time. He was no match for the taller brunette who made the throwable orbs in nearly record time. With pale hands, he threw three toward his friend and began running to a new hiding spot. The battle lasted but twenty minutes with Jack as the victor. Poor Hiccup laid on the ground, staring up at the night sky in defeat. He hardly noticed his companion walk over and lay next to him until he felt a hand hold his own. It was cold and wet from throwing snowballs, making him glance down at it before turning to its owner.

They had done this once before; hold hands as they looked at the stars. And, each time they did it, he felt their bond become slightly stronger. Something he couldn't explain. He turned back to the stars and took in every twinkle, every light, all the energy they gave off.

"What do you think they are, Hic?" Jack asked. "The stars, I mean."

The other shook his head, holding tighter onto his hand to warm it. "I don't know. My dad says that the stars, the moon, and the sun are all Gods. And that they're watching usâ€|judging usâ€|testing us. But I don't believe that."

"Then what _do _you believe?" He asked, turning to the slight red head. The way his lips curled in thought, it made him think of his own parents; how they used to kiss each other goodnight and goodbye. When he asked about the action, his mother said it was to show others how much they care about them.

After a moment of deep thought, he smiled. "I think that it's something more." He said. "I believe that each star was a good person that used to live. When a good person dies, they are sent into a world of happiness and look down at us from above. They guide us, protect us. Maybe even love us."

Jack stared at the other for a moment longer. He tried to count every freckle but lost track several times. Giving up, he stared into his zoned out eyes. The city lights were mostly out which made the stars sparkle more, reflecting off his eyes. He could see every twinkle, every movement and he couldn't help but smile.

The beeping of Hiccup's watch pulled them away from their fantasy world and forced them to sit up. He sighed and looked at the time. "We need to go home nowâ€|" He mumbled.

"Wait." The seven year old said, placing a hand on his friend's arm.

His green eyes turned to face his brown. They stayed like this for a moment, just staring at each other. He held his breath stared into the melted chocolate orbs the other held, not noticing that the gap between them was slowly getting smaller until he felt his cold lips touch his own.

At first, it felt wrong. About as wrong as drinking orange juice after brushing your teeth. His eyes went wide as he pulled away. But, that felt wrong as well. Jack rubbed his arm and looked away, opening his mouth to apologize when Hiccup leaned forward and pressed his warm lips against his once more. This time, he was the one with plates for eyes. He pulled away and looked up at him.

"Was that wrong?" He asked, fidgeting as he stood up.

The brunette shook his head and smiled. "No."

* * *

><p>AN: Should I continue or not or...what? - ADAM**

Reviews = Motivation = Chapters

2. Tears

A/N: Alright, wow. That was a lot of reviews. Thank you. I've never gotten that many reviews in one chapter before. I guess I should continue then, huh? Tell you what: If I get at least 100 reviews by the end of the fic and a big enough following, I'll make a sequel. Sound good? Anyway, lets continue with my crap ass writing you all seem to love.

* * *

><p>"Because I care about you."<p>

This was the only answer poor little Hiccup had gotten when he asked about the act he shared with Jack. Strange how one small thing such as a kiss could get your head spinning and your heart pumping. He would sit at the table with his family during dinner and awkwardly start thinking about it, lightly touching his lips in thought.

Whenever he saw the seven year old after that, he would want to do it again; press his warm lips up to his cold ones. But, not only were people all around him, he wasn't sure if this was the way he was supposed to feel. Yeah, of course he cared about his best friend. Was he supposed to care this much, though? Upon asking his father on the subject of kissing and feelings, he received a college lecture. He then would complain to himself that he was in the first grade and wasn't ready for those kind of talks.

Everything seemed to be brighter when he was with him. The snow wasn't that cold anymore and he didn't feel the need to hide himself in his giant coat. Although, he still did whenever Jack showed

Snotlout up, just to hide his laughter.

Instead of him showing up every other night, it turned into every single one. The four taps became quicker each time and the younger one's boots would already be on his feet when he jumped out of bed. Over time, they ran out of things to talk about and simply just laid there enjoying each others company.

Hiccup would continue to stare at the stars, trying his best to count them but always lost track after one hundred and fifty two and Jack would lay on his side and poke the other's freckles, making different designs each time as he played connect the dots. Their hands would be linked between them and the world would be silent. Nothing could seem to go wrong.

Some nights, the smaller of the two would fall asleep in the field and wake up in his bed with no recollection on how he got there. The only clues he had were an open window, wet footprints, and water dripping from his cheek.

Tonight turned out differently. As the Haddock child lay in his bed, fully clothed and ready for another night of being a ninja, the window opened with the sound of sniffing. He blinked his eyes open and saw a darkened figure stand in the middle of his bedroom. Turning on the light, he found Jack standing there; no shoes and tears streaming down his face. He only had one pair of shoes and they were torn, battered with holes, stains all over them. Still, they were the only protection he had against the snow.

He stripped off his heavy coat and threw it to the side, taking the other's hand in his. "Jack?" He asked as he looked him over. "What's wrong? What happened?"

"Can I stay here tonight?" He managed to say through quiet sobs.

Hiccup nodded and walked him over to his bed, kicking off his boots in the process. There was no way he was going to say no especially to him and that face. It'd be just as wrong as stealing something. And it didn't matter if the bed got wet when the snow that clung to him melted, it'd be dry by morning anyway.

Climbing in as well, he threw the blanket over both of them and instantly was hugged by his cold, crying friend. He hugged back and stared at the tears as they streamed down. A few patches of dirt stuck to his cheeks with clear, pale lines running through them. From what he could tell, this boy had been sobbing for a while now. Rubbing circles into his back, he whispered promises of snow cones and ice cream, sweet things the other enjoyed immensely. All he received in return were nods and more quiet cries.

Jack's grip on the smaller boy grew tighter, one hand on his waist the other trapped in his red-brown hair. The events that had happened at home flooded his mind. How could someone do that to a person they loved? It was unthinkable, horrible. He still can't believe it happened.

Sniffing, he placed his chin on top of his friend's head. "H-Hiccup" He sobbed out.

Hardly ever did the other use his full first name. Usually it was nicknames, 'turtle', 'Hic'. At first he knew something was wrong. Now, he knew it was something terrible. He opened his mouth to answer back but was quickly interrupted.

"Hiccup, I promise. I promise I'll take care of you a-and I promise to never hurt you." He sniffled once more as his cries began fading into nothing. "I promiseâ€|you're my Hiccup and I'll take care of youâ€|"

Tears began welling in his eyes as he heard the oath he took. One trickled down his cheek and called the attention of the taller boy who looked down at that very moment. He raised the hand that was rested on a thin waist and whipped it away, not wanting Hiccup to taste the salty eye water. No, his Hiccup was more into sour things; lemon drops and green apples. He deserved the best even if he couldn't give it to him. Placing a small kiss on his forehead, he drifted off to sleep; the other following suit a second later.

It was hard explaining everything to his father and mother the next morning. He left out more than he should of as he spoke, only talking about his friend crawling in through the window and asking to spend the night. If his family knew the whole of the story, they might not approve and they'd tell him never to see Jack again. Although, as he stood there in the check-out line with his mother and a cart of groceries, he began to think that it was hardly possible. They loved him, after all, didn't they?

The sound of laughter pulled him from his thoughts, almost forcing him to look at the source. In the next line stood two grown men holding hands as they placed their items down. The cashier talked with them, congratulating them on moving into the neighborhood. Never did Hiccup see such a couple, so happy just being themselves. He couldn't help but smile and imagine him and Jack placing items of their own down on the belt. Yes, that's how he wanted it. He wanted to live happily and hold hands openly without worry of judgment or hate. Just like these two. It seemed only right.

He watched as they placed cups of chocolate pudding and a frozen cheese pizza on the belt. It reminded him of the seven year old. At school, they get the choice of either fruit or a pudding cup to go with their lunch. One day, Jack seemed overly excited. They had chocolate pudding as the choice that day and he gladly took it. Sitting next to Hiccup, he spread the pudding over the plain pizza slice and ate it with the biggest grin of all on his face. The six year old told him that it was gross, but, didn't stop him from eating it. With a plastic butter knife, he cut a small square for his friend to try and put it on the table. Hesitation made his hands shake for a moment before taking the square and eating it. Contrary to popular belief, it was rather good. But, he wouldn't try it again. He was more into sour things than sweet.

"Hiccup?" His mother asked.

Snapping back to reality, he looked down at his fingers which grazed his lips lightly. He shook his head and looked up at his mother. "Yes?"

She stared at him for a moment, wondering just what he was doing with his fingers that close to his mouth. Or rather, what was he thinking

about? More than likely food or maybe what cartoon would be on when he got home.

Dinner that night was by far the most awkward moment in Hiccup's life aside from when he was born. His father walked in with steam fuming out of his ears and his beard a mess. Something was to his disapproval.

"Welcome home dear." His wife said more chipper then she should have been. "How was work today?"

Stoick tugged on the side of his beard as he mumbled a 'good, good, fine, fine'. When she placed his dinner in front of him, she raised an eyebrow. "Was it? Was it really?"

He glanced over at his son for a moment then at the window, making sure the new neighbors were inside before he shook his head. Stoick was an old fashioned man and took tradition seriously. A little bit too seriously if you asked the right amount of people. He sighed and took his hand off his beard, no longer holding it in.

"I don't approve of our neighbors." He finally spoke. "Why do they choose this lifestyle? I mean, it's insane."

His wife looked out the window toward the newly bought house before looking at her husband. "You mean the Johnsons?" She asked, giving her son his plate. "I think they're nice people."

"They aren't people, dear. They aren't even men." He rubbed his forehead and began to eat.

Hiccup looked up at his father and felt his chest tighten with worry. Him and Jack were like the Johnsons. They held hands, they kissed, they slept in the same bed even if it was only once. Oh, if his father found out the acts he did with his best friend, he'd be on the street before he could say 'labor day'. His stomach turned as he wondered how he'd be able to fit all of his toys and clothes in a hobo sack.

Pushing his macaroni and cheese around, he looked up at his mother. She didn't seem bothered by the Johnsons one bit. In fact, she seemed to like them. He watched as the two continued talking about the couple. Was it really that wrong?

His fingers curled as he held onto his chair and fork, glancing over at his father before speaking. "They just want to be happy." He said, his own voice reminding him of a mouse. "You know, like in fairy tales."

Stoick's eyes went wide at his son's words. He thought he brought him up differently. With arm rested between them, he stared down at his small son. The six year old looked back up at him and looked like he was trying to hide in his shirt which, wouldn't be hard to do for him. His child was born two months premature and was smaller than most his age.

"Son, have you ever read a fairy tale where two men live happily ever after?" He asked.

Hiccup shook his head, looking away from his father's gaze. "No,

Daddy. Have you ever seen a mermaid?"

"No. I haven't." Stoick said as he watched the boy grab the salt shaker.

He sprinkled salt over his peas and placed the shaker back, filling up his fork. "Just because you haven't seen it, doesn't mean it doesn't exist." Eating the peas, he looked up at the grown man and swallowed. "I can't see the air but I know it's there. If air exists, then people like the Johnsons can be happy."

At the other end of the table, his mother smiled. Her son was always so quiet and barely ever spoke up. This was an amazing change. But, when she turned to her husband, she found that his new found courage wasn't so amazing to others. With a look of utter anger, he stood up from the table with his plate and declared that he would be finishing in the bedroom.

It was hard for the child to finish eating after the scene. If his father could accept complete strangers, then, he couldn't accept him, either. The night was full of heated arguments about the boy; where he thought something as stupid as that, how it was a disgrace. Stoick's own son going against tradition, questioning it. The shouts were so loud, he didn't even notice the knocks on the window. All he wanted to do was go to sleep and wake up the next morning with a clean slate. As if none of this ever happened and Jackson Overland wasn't a friend of his at all. He turned in his bed, thinking it over and over and over, his eyes closed tightly.

'_Jackson Overland is bad_.'

'_Jackson Overland is the reason my daddy hates me_.'

'_Jackson Overland will leave me and forget me_.'

'_Jackson Overland_â€|_promised to take care of me_.'

'_Jackson__ cares about me_â€|'

'_Jack_â€|'

It was like a scene from a play. What was the play called, the one his school was talking about going to see? Ah, yes. Romeo and Juliet. It was almost as if he was on the balcony asking why a rose was a rose and why we gave it such a name, what did the name even mean. The clicking and sliding of his bedroom window matched with the opening of his green eyes and, low and behold, there he was.

The brown-eyed boy walked over to his friend and placed a hand on his blanket clad shoulder, his face twisted with concern and sadness. His whispers weren't audible but, he knew what he was asking. Shaking his head, he felt tears stream down his face. Pale hands whipped the salty waters away and stroked his hair until he fell asleep.

Most of the next day seemed new. Snotlout and the twins began their verbal attacks upon Hiccup who just sat there staring into the distance. The only defense he had at that moment was his stuffed dragon which he always carried around. It was small, much like him, and blue with yellow spikes. When he was a baby, he had hated the toy. Now, it was his only friend.

"Where's your bodyguard, huh?" Snotlout mocked as he pushed the boy off the bench. "Left you? Realized that you're just a waste?"

He was beginning to think so. There was no sign of the seven year old anywhere. Maybe he was taken by an eagle or kidnapped by the ice cream man. Another shove brought him to horrible reality.

Tuffnut chuckled, bringing his fist up and slamming it square in his face. His sister, Ruffnut laughed as she watched the runt fall to the ground. "Weakling! A weakling! Weakling! A weakling!" They chanted.

He could have sworn they wore steel-tipped boots. If they hadn't, then they should be spending their time playing kick ball rather than play kick the mistake. Out of no where, they stopped. No shouts from Snotlout, no protests from parents, nothing was heard but the sound of their footsteps and the laughter of children playing. He closed his eyes and just laid in the snow.

"Hic!" Jack's voice called.

The two spent almost an entire hour checking out the damage. Thankfully, there were no broken bones from the feel of things and the bruises didn't look that bad. Stripping his sweatshirt off, the older of the two began ripping it apart. Filling them with snow, he handed the makeshift ice packs to his friend who took them kindly.

Silence settled between the boys and an awkward tension began to rise. It was a miracle they could still breathe. Jack twiddled his thumbs and moved his fingers about. Clearly, there was something on his mind. Hiccup watched as he stuttered some small talk and answered back with simple 'yes' and 'no's.

Rubbing the back of his neck, he turned to the smaller boy and found it hard to look him in those forest green eyes. He was torn apart as he gazed down at the freckles that littered the child's face, not bothering to reach up and play connect the dots.

"H-Hiccupâ€¦|ummâ€¦| "

The other raised an eyebrow as he reached over to touch his ice cold hand which, he pulled away. It was almost like taking a needle to the stomach when his friend looked up at him, severally hurt. "Jackson?" He asked.

With a racing heart and tears building in his eyes, he decided to look at the smoothed pine tree pools the other held.

"Hiccupâ€¦|I'm moving away."

* * *

><p>AN: So, I learned while writing this chapter that there's another name for this pairing; Hijack. I told my friend that that's not a pairing name, that's what you do to steal a car. She hit me in the face. - ADAM
>

****Reviews = Motivation = Chapters****

3. Birthdays

****A/N:** I hate the state I live in; it's freezing cold one minute then blazing hot the next. My brother compared our state to Berk earlier today and, strangely enough, it makes sense. Not sure how I should feel about this. Anyway, enjoy.**

* * *

><p>It was a normal thing for him to do, but, it still felt odd. Whenever he climbed out of the bedroom window, he was hidden by the cover of night and could easily sneak around without anybody noticing. Today, though, the sun was brightly shining on his face and only heated him up more than he already was. If his parents found out about him running off, it wouldn't end well. Not. At. All.<p>

He began feeling like a wanted criminal and every single person in the streets were policemen waiting to take him in. Hiccup would have to dodge looks, run as fast as he can, and make sure not a single person saw him. With his backpack full of clothes, his stuffed dragon sticking out of the top, he ran off and hid behind the bushes of the Johnson's home. From what he remembered, Jack lived not too far from the park. One night, after looking up at the stars, he showed the younger boy the run down house. It smelt rotten and his fence was so broken, it was hard to still call it a fence. More like random wood around a shack.

Pressing his lips together, he planned the whole rout as quick as he could. The park was almost fifteen houses away; three houses, cross the street, five houses, cross the street, turn the corner, five houses, cross to the other side of the street, two houses, turn the corner. He lifted up and placed the hood of his sweatshirt on his head, looking around to see if anyone was around or if anyone was looking out their windows. Biting his bottom lip, he ran up the street, counting the houses as he passed them. Jumping into a snow banking, he looked around again. Coast was clear. No turning back. As fast as his little legs could carry him, he bolted across the street and continued running; counting houses and dodging looks like a true ninja. The hardest part was when he came to the park. It stood in front of him filled with children and their parents. Hiccup frowned and almost glared as he stared, thinking of a way to make sure Snotlout and the twins wouldn't see him. Then, he saw it. Something twinkled in the corner of his eye. Looking over, he saw all of the cars that belonged to the parents in the park. All, thankfully, lined in a row. The sun was on his side for the time being.

He darted across the street and hid behind the cars, peeking under them to see if anyone was coming. It reminded him of his late night snowball fights with Jack. His lips tugged into a smile as he remembered those times, his buck teeth slightly showing as he let out a small laugh. The brunette jumped to the other car and then the other, successfully making it all the way down the line.

"Yes!" He whispered and threw his arms up into the air.

One of his small fists managed to pump against the last car and set

off it's alarm, causing him to yelp, jump, and run with limbs flailing. As he neared his friend's home, he could hear two adults screaming at each other. The man began yelling names at the woman that he had never heard before. Wench, bitch, whore. What did those names mean and why was he saying them to her?

Out in the front yard sat the seven year old, a suitcase by his side and a dump truck toy in his hands. He didn't seem to pay much attention to his parents as he played. Hiccup didn't blame him. Nobody would want to hear such nasty words. And, seeing him so down, it tightened his chest and tears threatened his eyes. He blinked them back and walked over to the fence, bending down so he couldn't be seen by the bickering adults.

"Jack." He whispered, poking his head out. "Jackson."

The boy in question looked up and ran over, looking back at the two. "Don't say words like that in front of my son!" "I'll say whatever I damn well feel like saying!"

"Hic, what're you doing here?" The brown-eyed child asked. "You shouldn't be here."

With the goofiest smile he could pull off, the youngest showed his friend the bag on his back. "I'm coming with you. I think I can fit in the trunk."

Jack stared at him, almost in shock. His eyes stared off and he seemed to be considering the fantastic idea. Well, Hiccup liked to think it was a fantastic idea. Anything that kept them together would be delightful. But, he smiled sadly and shook his head, putting his hands on the smaller child's shoulders.

"You can't come with me."

Such simple words, yet, they struck him down and he felt like the titanic. His goofy smile turned into a horrible frown and his green eyes went wide with sadness. "B-but, you promised to take care of meâ€¦you're my only friend."

Why did he have to make this harder than it needs to be? Why did he have to bring up his promise and stutter a well known fact? Sighing, Jack turned and searched his suitcase. A few things began to hang out; shorts, underwear, a shirt. When he finally found what he was looking for, he jumped with a small smile on his face.

He walked over with curled up hands. "Here." The child said before opening his hands to reveal a blue and white weaved bracelet.

It was very simple, almost like he had braided it and treated it as hair. Hiccup remembered when he made this. Just about a week ago during art, the teacher had decided to let them do any craft they wanted. The six year old decided to decorate a plain mug with paint and macaroni, adding a few touches of glitter to give his mother's new mug a 'girly feel' he called it. His friend, however, made the very bracelet he was holding.

"It's a promise; a promise that I will find you again. Okay?" He said, poking his cheek to get his attention.

The brunette nodded and quickly strapped it to his wrist tightly. "I'll be waiting."

Nothing could stop the tears that began to flow down his freckle ridden cheeks. The only person that ever braved past those very freckles was leaving him. Even with this new promise, it still wasn't enough to stop the gross sobs that he let out. With a kiss to his friend's forehead, Jack ran off and grabbed his suitcase. His mother called him to the car while his father yelled at him for being a 'traitor', a 'sneak'.

The Haddock boy leaned his head up and watched as the car drove off. He felt himself sinking, his legs shaking as he turned and started running. There was no need to hide in the snow or behind bushes. He didn't care that people saw as his nasal fluids mix with his salty tears. They all thought low of him, anyway. This wouldn't change a thing.

All voices and sounds around him never reached his ears. The only thing he could hear was the beating of his racing heart. That is, until something caught his backpack strap and caused him to fall backwards.

"He looks uglier than usual." Tuffnut said, standing over him.

He was soon joined by Ruffnut and Snotlout, all three wearing stupid smirks. "What's the matter, crybaby?" The leader mocked. "Did your bodyguard leave you? Finally found out you are worthless?"

Hiccup stood up as fast as he could, hugging his stuffed dragon that had fallen out. "Leave me alone Snotlout!" He shouted and ran down the street.

The group of under aged bullies began laughing at him, chanting their usual weakling chant. Their voices echoed in his mind as he pushed the front door open and slammed it closed. His mother, who was in the kitchen, peeked in and watched as her son climbed the stairs. She went to call to him, ask him what was wrong but stopped when he proceeded to slam his bedroom door closed as well.

The weeks that followed were just as bad.

He didn't seem too interested in things that he once was obsessed with. Once again, he sat alone during lunch and ignored the comments others made about him. Their whispers always made it through his protective barrier, though, and he would look over at where Jack would sit. Whenever this would happen, the brown-eyed boy would smile and wave them off, telling him that they weren't worth listening to. That they didn't know how cool he actually was. He tried to imagine the child's voice with no luck.

The after school and park beatings continued, leaving him with bruises and black eyes. His mother called the school a few times to complain and ask why her child came home looking like he had been run over. The teacher on the other end would say that he had gotten into fights, an obvious lie.

The lies, punches, and evil whispers didn't stop that year. In fact, it was worst year yet. He couldn't count on his fingers the number of times he was strung to the flag pole or how many black eyes he had

received. Nor could he count the number of embarrassing fliers that hung in the halls after summer break.

Ugh, summer. If he had to choose, summer would have been the most horrible time in his short existence.

He and Jack had planned their whole vacation out. Amusement parks, water slides, sandcastles; it would have been the best time they ever spent together. Instead, he was sent to camp where they smeared honey over his sleeping frame and poured feathers as a special touch. There were pictures of him waking up in his new chicken form, being pushed into the lake stark naked, even hanging from the basketball hoop by his underwear. Snotlout placed the photos all over lockers and classrooms when school began.

Everyday after his torture and humiliation, Hiccup would rush home and check the mail box in hopes that his best friend had sent him a letter. Sadly, it'd be empty most days. He would sit in front of the phone every weekend and pray to the gods that Jack remembered his number. But, the only people that called wanted to talk to his mother or his father. Every now and then, the phone would ring and Stoick would pick it up. He'd mumble a few words before setting it back down, claiming that it was a telemarketer. After a few months, he started to loose hope and think that maybe Snotlout was right. Maybe Jack _did _find him useless. When those thoughts came into play, he would look down at the simple bracelet and would be reminded of all the promises the other had made.

Autumn soon came and with it, his birthday. His mother invited all of his classmates to come to the party in the hopes that at least one would take the place of his best friend.

When the day finally came, Hiccup had expected the usual; a few gifts at the table from his parents and other relatives, a large cake, many decorations, and no guests. Yet, he got ready anyway. Placing a party hat on his head, he sat with his stuffed dragon in the living room and watched television.

"Hiccup!" His mother called almost an hour later. "You have a guest!"

A guest? To his birthday? He raised an eyebrow and walked over, seeing a boy around his age at the door with his own mother.

The boy was chubby, his cheeks puffed out much like a chipmunk's. His nose seemed almost like a button and his eyes were just as small. "M-my friends call me Fishlegs." The child mumbled, holding a small box in his large hands.

"Fishlegs?" Hiccup asked and looked down.

Sure enough, under the husky frame sat two stick like legs. It was a miracle they held up so much weight.

The two played all day and even talked a few times. By the end of the party, the floor was littered with drawings of dragons, dirty plates, and wrapping paper. The days that followed seemed to get better. He smiled more and invited Fishlegs over every other day. Whenever they were together, he would softly touch his lips and wonder how Jack was doing; if he had missed the clumsy boy just the same. As soon as the

other's face appeared in his head, there was a knock on his bedroom door.

His mother stood there with a smile and declared that it was time for his new friend to go home.

"And Hiccup," She said, her car keys jingling in her hand. "I'm going to the store. Do you want to come with me?"

* * *

><p>AN: Them going to the store is important. Trust me. Sorry the last bit seems rushed, I had a brain cramp in the middle of writing it. - ADAM **

Reviews = Motivation = Chapters

4. Classes

A/N: Hey everyone, have a good day? Yeah? Well, let me just sit right here and **_ruin it for you with angst_****. Nothing personal :) Any who, enjoy some crap ass writing.**

* * *

><p>Ten Years Later€|

First day impressions are everything. It doesn't matter if it's your very first day of middle school or your first day as a Junior in high school, the impression you make on that day effects the rest of that year. That one day could mean the difference between sitting with the popular kids or having your head shoved down a toilet. And this year, he was hoping that everything would be different. This year, he wasn't going to be pushed into a trash can or hung in the locker room after gym. No, this year was going to be his year and he was going to make sure everyone knew it.

He had been standing in front of the mirror for almost seven minutes, staring at what he had on. Short sleeved brown sweatshirt, long sleeved green shirt, jeans, and his usual green converse. He glanced over at his night stand and contemplated on if he should wear his glasses. In truth, he only needed them when he watched television, played games, needed to see something far away, and went to the movies. But, there were times where he kept them on just because he liked to be able to see everything. With a sigh, he grabbed his bag and hiked downstairs. Nothing said 'geek' like glasses.

Stoick was already downstairs, cooking breakfast as he hummed. He wasn't the best cook in the world and usually allowed his son to make their meals. Every once in a while, though, he liked to treat his only child and let him sleep in late.

Upon seeing the teen slump into his seat, he smiled. "Ah, good morning, son!" He said cheerfully before handing him a plate of perfectly burned eggs.

"Uh, good morning€|dad." Hiccup looked over the€|'food' on his plate. '_How in the world could someone _burn_ eggs_?' He wondered to himself.

"Eat up, Hiccup." His father ordered lovingly. "You've got a big day ahead of you."

He stared down at the horrid breakfast Stoick had made him and could only imagine the charred, rough texture on his tongue. Not even Toothless, his black Labrador dog who ate almost anything would eat this.

Shaking his head, he pushed the plate away and picked up his bag. "Um, I think I'll eat at school. You know, free breakfast and lunch and all that."

"Suit yourself. More for me."

Toothless sat at the back door, his tail wagging furiously as his master came into sight. His front paws began to dance across the floor the closer Hiccup got. When the door finally opened, the dog bounced up and ran outside. It didn't take long before he was done, but, he became distracted as he started walking back inside. A small spot of light hit the shadows and called him to play. He barked at it, jumping all around as he tried to eat it. His master sighed. It was times like these that the brunette wondered why he still called his dog "well, dog. He acted more like a cat than anything else; always cleaning himself with his paws and whatnot, always trying to climb up on high places.

The teen whistled for his pet to return. Toothless didn't come. He whistled again. Still nothing.

After several attempts, the poor boy ended up having to pick up his overgrown pup and bring him inside himself. The wannabe cat whimpered and looked up at his master with large, innocent eyes; almost pleading to go back outside and chase the mysterious light. He ignored the eyes Toothless gave him, quickly running out the front door.

The time was 6:48 am exactly. The teachers would be arriving in five minutes and the library doors would be opened three minutes later. That left him seven minutes to run or walk depending on what he felt like and another minute to find a place to hide in the library. Usually, he hid in the way back on the left side where all the mythical being books were kept. This way, he wouldn't be seen if Snotlout and the twins were to walk by. On the first day of freshmen year, he made the mistake of sitting at the tables in front of the giant windows looking into the library. He came home sopping wet from being tossed into the school's pool.

Fishlegs, his one and only friend, came out of his house just as Hiccup came around the corner. Both were silent, but, still exchanged smiles and a small wave. The bullies lived not too far away and the two would always get scared that they would hear them if they were to talk on their way to school.

It was the first day of their Junior year. Looking over his friend, he could tell he was nervous as well. His blonde hair stuck out from under his baseball hat and he played with the bottom of his rather large jersey. Fishlegs was quite the baseball fan, keeping news clippings of his favorite team up over his desk on the wall. He had tried many times to get on the school's team only to fail each

time.

Hiccup played with the strange bracelet on his left wrist. The blue and white strings were weaved, much like a braid. Surprisingly, both colors stayed as bright as they were when he was little after all these years. He never took it off.

Fishlegs had questioned his friend many times on where he got the bracelet and the answer was always the same: Hiccup couldn't remember.

After that day all those years ago, his memory hadn't been the same. At certain times in certain places, he would chuckle at a random memory he had acquired at that moment. Or he would strike up a conversation with his father about the newfound part of his history. Sometimes, he would lay awake in his bed and try to imagine the faces of his past. In the end, though, they came out blurry like he had been underwater.

As the school came into view, he looked down at his phone. 6:52 am exactly. His heart sank into his stomach and swirled around as he wondered if Snotlout or the twins made it before they did. Mumbling a few 'good morning's and one or two 'hello's to teachers, the two slid into the library and hurried into the back left corner. Fishlegs dropped his backpack and panted as he leaned against the wall, soon sliding down to sit on the floor. His friend did the same, pulling out his small green notebook. Inside were writings and drawings, most of which were of snowflakes and dragons. Some of the pages contained old Norse characters which he had written down during heritage week every year. It would be one of the best and one of the worst weeks out of the whole school year. He would constantly be thrown into fights with classmates that questioned his Viking heritage. Of course, it always ended with him either in the nurse's office or hanging off the bathroom wall.

Peering over his shoulder, Fishlegs watched with awe as he began drawing a small dragon in the corner of a page. "You're so good at that." He admired.

"Good at what?" Hiccup asked. "Scribbling?"

"No, you're really good a drawing." The other said, leaning back to look at the smaller brunette. "And writing, too. I wish I had the same talent as you."

The soon-to-be sixteen year old looked over at his friend with a look of 'are you kidding me'. In his eyes, his tiny scribbles and sappy words were no more than just that. Tiny, sloppy scribbles and meaningless, sappy words.

He placed a hand on the blonde's shoulder and smiled slightly. "I wish I had the same talent as you, too, Fishlegs. Wish I could play baseball as good as you."

"I can't play baseball, you know that, Hiccup." He took his hat off and looked it over. "Can't even make the teamâ€¦" Fishlegs mumbled.

With another smile, he placed the hat on his friend's head. "It's because you're too good. You're better than the rest and it wouldn't

be fair."

Of course, that wasn't true. Both boys knew this. He couldn't even hit the ball when it was thrown at him. Still, it was nice to hear that he was good at something he loved.

The bell rang and the two stood, heading out of the library with caution. One wrong step, one twist of the head and it could be all over. They both kept their eyes down and walked as fast as they could to their first classes. Hiccup shared third and fourth period with Fishlegs. Second period he shared with the twins and Snotlout. He sighed as he walked into Health class by himself. Not too many students occupied the room; two girls, four boys including himself. But, as the second bell rang, the teens started walking in with the teacher right behind them.

The first day of classes were always full of introductions, year planning, and boredom. As well as plenty of time to draw, write, text, anything the teens could do without getting caught. Even as he had his nose stuck in his small, green notebook, he kept his ears open for what the teacher talked about.

First quarter: physical health.

Second quarter: sex ed.

Third quarter: mental health.

Fourth quarter: medical practice.

When it was time for introductions, he quickly stood up and mumbled his name. This continued to the next class; P.E. Many kids began stretching as soon as they walked into the gymnasium. Hiccup just sat ideally by and watched, almost trying to hide in the bleachers. Ruffnut and Tuffnut had been kicking each other until the teacher came in and broke up the fight. Snotlout was playing basketball with a group of husky teens much like himself, making a basket every time and gloating about it. He could have sworn the horse was well beaten and dead.

'_Yes_, _we all get it_.' The brunette thought to himself. '_You_'_re perfect_, _you can make baskets_, _you_'_re the best football player_. _We get it_, **_we get it_**, **_we get it_**.'

When the fight between the twins was over, everyone was called into a group to play a small game. It's how physical education always started every year. The kids would stand in a circle, throw a ball to someone and they must say their name. The group would then repeat it back and continue with the next person.

As the game started, Hiccup's stomach began to freeze with nervousness. When the ball was tossed toward him, Snotlout caught it. He announced his own name then turned to the other, much scrawnier teen and declared his name to be 'useless'. The others laughed and laughed, repeating the name back. This was the most embarrassing moment of his life so far.

The day only seemed to get worse and worse. Lunch seemed to be all about Snotlout and how 'amazing' he was. Girls and boys alike gathered around his lunch table as he raced against Tuffnut to see

who could drink the most milk cartons. Of course, the pigged nose snot faced teen won and did a victory lap around the room, fists pumping into the air. The crowds cheered all expect for Hiccup and Fishlegs who sat silently, playing with baseball cards and exchanging books.

Any teenager would tell you there is nothing like the sound of the final bell. The indication that it was time to put down the papers and turn on the Xbox. Trying to avoid getting caught, the fifteen year old went out the back door of the school and started down the alleyway. Behind the building stood another; the school's pool inside. Hoots and shouts echoed off the tilted walls and soon, the door opened the reveal the terrible three.

"It's the useless!" Snotlout screamed, pointing a sausage finger at him. "Grab him!"

He turned and ran for it, trying to make it to the front of the school. His heart pulsed in his ears and his face braced itself for an intense beating. A lump began to build in his throat as he turned the corner and tripped. This was it. No running now. He was going to get pounded and it was going to hurt. There was no telling what kind of training the three had did over the summer; he had been locked in his house all break.

Turning over to lay on his back, he stared at the way he had came and waited. And waited. And waited.

There were no footsteps, no hoots or shouts. Nothing other than a few cars driving by and one or two students talking in front of the school. Hesitantly, Hiccup stood up and peeked around the corner.

The terrible three laid passed out on the ground, their chests still rising and falling as they breathed. A teen about his age stood over Snotlout and glanced over his shoulder at the brunette. His crystal blue eyes seemed unnatural and dark roots had started forming in his pure white hair. A hospital mask hung off of his face, a snowflake design sown into it in a sloppy manner. His blue sweatshirt made him seem very thin until he looked down at his legs. The tan shorts he wore seemed to make them bulge out.

And around his feetâ€|no shoes? Just wrappings? Who was this kid?

Before he could say anything, the white haired teen walked over and tugged Hiccup's left arm, revealing the strange bracelet. The odd character then smiled and sighed with slight relief as he took his hospital mask off.

"Hicâ€|I found you."

* * *

><p>AN: Oh gods, I'm so tired. I'm gonna...yeah, I'm gonna go to sleep. - ADAM
>

Reviews = Motivation = Chapters

5. Walks

A/N: I have been on the tumblr again and have noticed a common phrase used by those who write/draw Frostcup/HiJack. That phrase is 'woops, my hand slipped'. Those aren't the exact words, they are changed depending on the person. But, it still has the same meaning. I know they are just joking, still, this is a message for those that write or draw HiJack that have used this: your hand didn't slip. No, it didn't. It **_danced_**** across the flipping paper or keyboard. It swan laked all over your drawing tablet. Your hand didn't slip, it did the flipping ****_waltz_****. That is all.**

* * *

><p>There were many ways he had envisioned this day. He had imagined that Hiccup would smile the biggest smile the goof ever did give and jump into his arms. He had imagined that Hiccup would press his smooth, honey flavored lips against his chapped, peppermint ones.<p>

What he didn't imagine was the confused look he had at that very moment.

Hiccup, instead of kissing him or hugging him, pulled his arm away and took a step back. He seemed unsure of himself as he did so, almost seemingly getting ready for a fight if need be. The white haired teen frowned as he stared at his friend. He wanted to reach out and hug him, explain everything.

"Hiccup, it's me." He walked forward, almost begging for the other to embrace him. "It's Jack. I know I look different, but â€" "

"Jack who?" The brunette interrupted.

A look of surprise came across the other's face. Did Hiccup really forget? All the snowball fights, every star they counted together, was it really all gone? He stared at him, pain striking his face. Jack shook his head and went to hold his friend's hand, only to watch as it was snatched away again.

His once happy green eyes were narrowed with confusion. "I don't know who you are. I'm sorry, I think you have the wrong person."

"I don't have the wrong person." But, the words didn't seem to reach the other's ears. The fifteen year old turned and walked away, not wanting to be his next punching bag.

Jack had to think quickly; what was something that could trigger the younger boy's memory? The kissing was defiantly out and so wasn't the nights they spent together. He stared at Hiccup's back as he walked off and noticed something peeking out from his bag. A small, thin green notebook with his complete name written in black sharpie sat there amongst gym clothes and health books. As quiet as he possibly could be, he reached over and pulled it out with expert skill. Inside were dragon drawings and small stories sown into each other.

He smiled as he flipped through the pages. "I like your dragons."

The smaller teen froze in place, slowly turning to the stranger. Fury began to build as he watched him flip through without a care in the world. Only two people saw the contents of that book: Fishlegs and himself. Seeing this complete random idiot read his personal thoughts, go through what he considered his mind made him feel violated.

"Give me that!" He screamed and lunged forward.

Jack, however, was faster than him and moved the book out of the way. He had seen his room as a child, how littered it was with dragon drawings. When he had first walked into the brunette's room, he thought that it was wallpaper; not scraps of scribbled paper.

With a smile, he stared at one page in particular. The creature doodled upon the paper was dark, yet cute in it's own way. It's eyes were huge and it's wings spanned to the other page. A poem laid next to it, speaking about the dangers of this creature. It was, like almost everything drawn in the book, a dragon. The name repeated a few times in the poem, saying how deadly it was. Night Fury was it's name. He nodded in approval and then continued to the other pages that seemed to be beckoning his name.

"You're really good, you know that?" He said, walking away from his friend. "They're so detailedâ€¦"

"Give it back!" Hiccup snapped as he swiped it from Jack's cold, pale hands. "Don't touch this! Don't ever touch this!"

The fifteen year old looked over his precious notebook carefully. No papers were bent, no rips on the edges. It was about as perfect as it was when he placed it in his bag. The white haired teen raised his arms to show he meant no harm.

He smiled playfully and backed away, chuckling slightly. "I won't touch it anymore." A small sound came from his pocket and his smile became sad. "Guess I'll see you tomorrow."

Hiccup raised an eyebrow as he watched the stranger run and turn the corner. He waited for a moment, comprehending the event that just happened. This person whom he had never seen before had saved him from black eyes and possibly being thrown into the school's pool.

Everything the other had said and done replayed in his head as he walked home. There must have been a time he had known Jack. The look in his unnatural eyes showed recognition the moment they fixed themselves on him. And, he hated to admit it, but, there was something familiar about the voice he had never heard before. Almost like it had played in a dream or in a movie. The words the white haired teen had said echoed in his ears and, for a moment, he wondered if he'd ever see him again.

This came across his mind many times before when he had met someone new. Usually, it was when he went to the park or when he was at the store. Of course, he never saw those people again; those handful of children his age that acted nice. So it was only natural to assume he'd never see the barefooted stranger ever again. And in some way, he hoped he'd never see him another day in his life. It was all so confusing and caused him to play with his lip like a chew toy as he

thought over the emotions. Part of him wanted to see him again, get a chance to know the alleyway fighter past his blue eyed contacts. Another side of him wanted to never know what laid beyond that white hair. For some reason, when the older boy commented on his scribbles and doodles, he could feel his heart stop and his face become hot with a light blush.

Ever since Hiccup could remember, his father had told him how life is supposed to be; how it's supposed to work. A child is born between a man and a woman, husband and wife. The child grows up and goes through school, getting a job after or during collage. As the years go on, the child meets a member of the opposite gender and marries them. The cycle then repeats itself once the husband and wife come together to make a child.

"Being gay is a choice." His father would say. "A choice that goes against tradition."

In Stoick's eyes, men have nothing to offer each other. The chances of them being happy for the rest of their lives were little to none. Many times he had told his son this and many times he had told his son about the dangers of being hurt. That going into a relationship like that, choosing to be that way would get him hurt in the long run.

And it scared him every night when he would lie awake wondering why his heart didn't ache for girls. Why it didn't ache for Astrid, the Junior who his father pushed him eagerly towards every party they had.

For the rest of the walk home, he was frightened by what Jack made him feel. His heart pounded in his ears like how it did when he watched horror movies. He braced himself as he began turning the door knob, almost expecting The Grudge to make her awful sound and crawl down the stairs toward his feet. Hiccup swung the door open and sighed in relief when there was no Japanese ghost at the top of the staircase. Toothless trotted his way over, his tail wagging faster the closer he got to his master.

"Hey bud." The brunette greeted as he patted the dog on the head. "Dad still at work? Must have been lonely today."

Stoick worked as a police officer. His shift started at seven and usually ended around six. The fifteen year old had a love/hate relationship with his father's occupation, leaning more toward hate than love. There were some days he came home completely fine and had nothing to report. Other days he came home reeking of pepper spray, stains all over his uniform, and his mouth blabbering until one of them went to sleep.

Walking into the kitchen, he grabbed a small dog treat and threw it into the air. As almost always, Toothless jumped; catching it impressively. "Let's go for a walk, okay bud?"

Hiccup threw his backpack on the table as he grabbed his pet's leash. The black lab barked happily, pulling on the leash. His master laughed. "Alright, alright! Calm down!"

The walk around the block was a refreshing one. Unlike the walk home, his mind was clear and he smiled up at the birds that perched

themselves in the trees. Every once in a while, meaning, almost every minute, his mind wasn't at peace. Every time a person waved to him, said hello to him, or even just walked passed him; Toothless was there to growl and bark. The poor boy kept having to apologize for his dog's behavior and pull him out of the situation. Under certain circumstances, like if Snotlout or the twins were walking past, this would have been fine and would actually help him. But, he had to stop this habit of attacking strangers when they went on walks.

The large animal pulled the teen made of nothing but skin and bones down the street, around a few corners, and through various parking lots. It seemed the further they got, the dirtier the town seemed to get. He was used to clean streets and houses not wrappers flying in your face and small apartments on top of each other. Most of the buildings that surrounded him were abandoned, red 'x's painted on the doors to show that they needed to be torn down. A few dogs barked and a cat fight violently made itself known a street over.

"Uh, Toothless" The brunette mumbled. "Why did you drag me down here? It's so" A man looked up from his place on the street, his brown toothed grin sending a shiver down his spine.
"eerie."

Toothless only answered with another sniff of his sleeve. Pressing his nose to the ground, he ran off in the direction of a large building that could have once been a factory. An ice cream cone sign hung off the side, it's sprinkles faded and color completely gone. Hiccup raised an eyebrow at the sight of the fixture and turned to his pet. As he opened his mouth to ask why they were there, the sound of people laughing made him jump.

"Back here." He whispered to Toothless and hid behind a dumpster, watching as teens and adults alike began walking toward the front door.

Each and every single one of them wore a sweatshirt, each a different color. Squinting his eyes, he could see that they also wore masks. Some covered just their eyes, some their entire face. One in particular caught his eye. A teen wore the blue sweatshirt, his hood covering his head. The mask he wore belonged to a hospital and a snowflake was crudely sewn with blue fabric.

His green eyes went wide as he watched Jack converse with the green and purple sweatshirts. '_He must have smelt him on me_.' He thought. '_Damn overprotective dog_'

Toothless, who sat next to him, growled lowly as they marched themselves inside. He had wanted to see who was that close to his human and inspect them for himself. So far, this new being wasn't setting a very good impression on him.

"Let's get out of here." Hiccup muttered and quickly ran out to the street.

His heart raced and his fingers twitched as he walked through the downtown area. All the possibilities of what could happen ran through his head and only made him bite on his nails. At any moment, someone could jump out and mug him. Or they would jump out and stab him, leaving him to die in the urine smelling street. It was also possible that someone would kidnap him, maybe sell him into sex slavery.

He could feel his blood rush out of his face and down into his toes. His heart stopped as he thought about being on his knees in front of Ja-

No.

No, he couldn't think about that.

He had to think about something else. Something happy. Yes—cotton candy, A plus on a test, snow, clear night skies, stars.

"Hiccup!" The sudden booming voice made him jump and scream until he realized who it was.

"Son, what are you doing here?" Stoick asked as he looked over his frightened child. It was a good thing, he began to think, that he was checking out the lower neighborhoods before returning home early.

When the brunette did nothing but stare at him, he narrowed his eyes. "Don't just stand there, get in the car."

Hiccup quickly scrambled into the car, placing Toothless in the back. Most of the ride back home was awkward, people staring at him as they drove by. It wasn't everyday you see a teenager in the passenger's seat of a cop car. Especially Stoick's. Gobber, his partner in justice, always sat in this seat.

He bit his lip, not minding that his buck teeth were showing. "So, uh, dad." He stumbled. "What were you doing here?"

"I've been checking out the lower neighborhoods." His father answered. "A lot of gang activity lately."

Gang. The word sent ice cold shakes throughout his whole body. Flashes of horrid memories and echoed screams forced him to throw up his arm in defense. He couldn't stop his heart rate, his chest twisting with pain. And then, as quick as it came, the panic attack ended, his body uncurling itself.

Stoick looked at his son calmly. He had done this a few times before and it was slightly natural to see him in such a sad state. "Hiccup, are you alright?"

"Yeah—" He cleared his throat. "Yeah, yeah, I'm fine dad."

The memories that had whipped him faded as he reached over to the right side of his head, slowly rubbing the scar that sat under his hair.

* * *

><p>AN: First, I want to clear things up. I am not against LGBT people. I'm gay and transgender(ftm) myself. And I don't really want Stoick to be that much of a bad guy, that's why I keep saying 'tradition'. Because that's what he grew up on, 'normal' traditions. In fact, I wish I had a dad like Stoick. Well, not in this way, but like in the movie and in the show. But yeah. Sorry if I've offended you. I had no intention to. Just...sorry. - ADAM

>

****Reviews = Motivation = Chapters**

>

6. Masks

****A/N: Sorry that this chapter is completely suckish. I tried my best. But, uh, yeah, enjoy?****

* * *

><p>It was absolutely blistering hot. Even with the air conditioning on, the heat was just too much. Then again, what does one expect when one stands in a room full of humans; the same chilling feeling as being trapped in ice?<p>

The room was rather large but, it still kept the heat in. Jack began chewing the inside of his cheek as he stared at the air conditioner that sat high on the wall. Hopefully, it would cool the place off soon and he could finally feel comfortable. He was never used to the heat, hardly ever going outside during the summer or hot days. Why couldn't they have been called during the night when the air wasn't suffocating him?

"Ya look a lil' annoyed."

Rolling his eyes, the seventeen year old looked over at one of his manyâ€|'brothers'. Aster was a tall man, roughly around thirty-five. His slight beard seemed to connect with the hair on his head and the small white whiskers that stood out reminded Jack of bunny rabbits. The mask he wore covered his whole forehead and eyes, an Easter egg painted next to the left eyehole and a plus sign painted on the right. There were many fights based around that single egg, all of them ending with him on top. It wasn't the smartest move to mock and tease the weapons expert of the 'family'.

He sighed and rubbed the back of his neck, whipping away the sweat. "Of course I'm annoyed. You know I hate the heat."

Aster chuckled and placed his hand on the teen's hood covered head. "Ya look more annoyed than tha', Snowflake."

"Fuck off, cottontail." Jack didn't want to admit that his friend was right.

All he could really think about was Hiccup. He lightly touched his mask, his fingers skimming across the horrible snowflake design as he thought back on the whole conversation they had all but two hours ago. The look in his green eyes was unforgettable and they pierced into his chest. It seemed like just yesterday that those same, wonderful eyes were wide and lit up by the stars that surrounded the Earth. Now, they were darker, the eyes of someone he didn't know. And it hurt to think that his Hiccup, the one thing that has been keeping him going, didn't want anything to do with him.

Aster scuffed and pushed his 'little brother's' head. "Piss off, Frost." He grumbled before walking over to a few new guys, bruises

and black eyes still raw on their faces.

Each member of the pack carried not only a symbol of the family but an individual one all their own. It showed that they were the same, yet, still different from the rest in their unique way. Some were given nicknames based on those symbols. Jack 'Frost', Aster 'Bunnymund'â€|

"Hey, Jack." 'Tooth' Anna.

The white haired teen looked over at the girl beside him. Her purple sweatshirt helped bring out the many feathers that flowed out of the top of her mask. She reminded him of birds until he saw the small teeth charms dangling from the bottom, sitting on her cheeks and nose.

He smiled even though he knew she couldn't see it. "Hey Tooth. How are you doing today?"

"Oh, I'm alright." She played with her long, very colorful hair as she spoke. "You know, pulled out a few teeth today, filled in some cavities. The usual."

Jack nodded. Many of the older members of the gang had healthy jobs; dentists, doctors, teachers. It had confused him at first why they were part of such a thing in the first place. They were getting money, they had a home. Then, during his first week of being part of this gathering, it dawned on him. None of these people had an actual family. They had no mom or dad, no brothers or sisters. And if they did, they weren't treated the way a child was meant to be treated. They all wanted to be part of a family that understood them, that accepted them, that loved them the same way the Waltons or the Brady Bunch loved their children.

Tooth was more of a mother figure than she was a sister to him. Whenever he was given a hard time by other gangs in the area or needed a place to shower, she took him under his wing. She was very much unlike his actual mother and that's what he liked about her.

Up on the balcony that overlooked the old ice cream factory, two of the oldest members began setting up a microphone stand. The feedback and every bump or groan they made against the actually microphone echoed throughout the room. Out of respect for their leader, everyone removed their masks. Once the seventeen year old placed his under his chin, his face twisted at the strange smell that entered his nose. The whole building smelt like the inside of an empty freezer.

Both members sighed and walked back down the small staircase to join the others. All was silent as their 'father' came out, dressed from head to toe in black as always. His trusted right hand man stood next to him, covered in completely nothing but red.

Pitch Black tapped his finger against the microphone as his mouth twisted into what Jack guessed was supposed to be a loving smile. "I am glad you all could make it."

'_Not like we had a choice_.' He thought to himself.

Red Death shifted slightly as he stood next to Pitch, staring down at the crowd as he did. "As you may have seen, the pesky police

department have caught onto our trail. They are circling our territories, bringing in our brothers and sisters. "

Jack looked around. There were a lot less people here than a few weeks ago. It slightly worried him that he might be the next to be brought into a jail cell.

"I have organized a plan to bring them back." He cleared his throat and brought his hands together. "On my way here, I happened to notice a small boy. I thought nothing of him at first until I saw a police cruiser drive up and take him in."

A few of the members began whispering and muttering, some asking if certain people were there in the room. 'I'm over here's and 'right here dumbass's were passed around until Pitch tapped the microphone again, silencing them all.

He stood there, letting the quiet settle for a moment before leaning forward and finishing. "I have asked Red here to look up every member of the police force to see if any have a child. Only one of them does."

Red handed him a large piece of paper, quickly throwing his hands back behind him again. Nobody knew his real name and, frankly, nobody wanted to ask. Just having him stare at you was enough to make you cry for your mommy. Pitch unrolled the picture and showed it to the lot.

Jack's eyes went wide when he registered who it was. There, smiling at him with now dark green eyes was a picture of Hiccup. His heart sank into his stomach as he stared back at his childhood friend and his hands shook. Tooth looked up at worriedly.

"Jack?" She whispered while the others all rambled on.

Their leader raised his hand and caused everyone's voices to fade. "We shall take this boy and only give him back when our

â€"

"No!"

Everyone's heads turned.

Jack was the youngest of the group but not new at all. He had been in the gang ever since he was seven and knew just what happened to hostages. Hell, he was one up until the age of thirteen. Tooth or Aster would call the police and claim he was their son. He would stay up in a house or strange building with another member, being beaten until they got the ransom. It was easy money and they were set up for weeks, but, he still carried the scars.

If they took Hiccup as an actual hostage, who knows what might happen. They were going easy on him. They wouldn't on Hiccup. And there was no way he was going to let that happen.

Pitch raised an eyebrow and slowly walked down the stairs with Red trailing behind. His blood rushed, his hands balled into fists; he was ready for a fight if need be. When the black clad man stopped in front of him, all he did was look down. Most of the members carried contacts. Pitch was one of those few.

Those awkward gold eyes dug themselves into Jack, almost ripping out his very soul. It was the same look he always got when he had done something wrong. Still, it chilled him to his very core each time.

He looked away, playing with the bottom of his sweatshirt. Nobody else in the room had a blue sweatshirt and it made him feel even more alone than he already was.

"No?" Pitch asked. "Did you just tell me no, little Frost?" His voice churned his stomach yet, still seemed to make him melt.

Jack slowly nodded. "Yes, sir. I did. A-and I have a good reason for doing so."

"Oh I bet you do." He crossed his arms as he stared down at the boy he looked after, clothed, and feed. "I would love to hear it."

Contact blue eyes traveled away from the black fabric chest and found spring green eyes. He stared at Aster, almost begging him, pleading him to come over and help. Of course, the elder man shook his head and mouthed out an apologize. He was on his own. Swallowing hard, he narrowed his eyes before looking up. There was no way he was going to show weakness.

"They have files on us, too. I'll get close to the kid, make him trust me, burn the files, and get our people out." Most of it was a lie. He was not going use Hiccup in such a way. But, he had no other choice. Either he did this or they were going to take him.

Pitch looked up in thought. It wasn't long before he rubbed his chin and nodded, agreeing with the proposal. With another raise of his hand, everyone began mumbling again. Some left while others wondered the factory halls.

Aster walked up to him, his eyes narrowing. "Are ya out of your mind, mate?" He hissed through his teeth. "You could've gotten yourself killed!"

"What were you thinking?" Tooth whispered.

Jack shrugged. "I had to protect him." Nobody knew of his relationship with Hiccup. Well, what once was a friendship. Now everything between them was one sided and completely awkward.

He laid in his bed that night and stared out the window. The downtown lights were usually bright, making it hard to stargaze. Every now and then, though, he'd see a little flicker in the sky and smile. He began to wonder just what would have happened if he never went away. Maybe the two would be laying in their old field, counting stars and freckles. The sky would probably be brighter and colors would be vibrant. Orange juice just might have tasted better after brushing his teeth if he never left. If anything, the brunette would at least remember who he was.

The next day was full of suckers and lollipops. The seventeen year old walked around smugly with his hood up and hands seemingly in his pockets. Whenever a person came around the corner, his flattened lips

would twist into an evil smile and he'd bump into them. He'd mutter a 'sorry' or 'pardon me' and continue on his way, a few dollars or a watch in his hand. The hours seemed to go by slowly as he waited for the Haddock teen to be done with school. He traded at least four watches, three bracelets, two diamond rings, and a partridge in a pear tree by the time the clock struck two o'clock.

With a bag of lollipops in his sweatshirt pocket, he made his way to the high school. Teenagers and teachers alike all scrambled out the doors, ignoring him as they walked home, to the buses, or to their cars. The cotton candy lollipop in his mouth crushed into bits when his teeth chomped down on it. If Tooth knew he was eating junk food, she'd have his head.

Out of the sea of mostly blondes was a small brunette looking down at his feet. Jack's heart practically leaped out of his chest and his legs almost gave out from under him. The sun hit the boy just right to show off the natural red highlights he always had. It reminded him of better days.

The white haired teen walked over, a little spring in his step as he did. "Hey there."

Hiccup rolled his eyes and stuffed his phone in his pocket. "It's you. What do you want? Are you here to beat me up too?"

"What?" Jack chuckled. "No, I'm not. I just think we got off on the wrong foot yesterday." He held out his hand, taking his hood off with the other. "Let's start over. I'm Jack."

The fifteen year old stared at him, a slight blush trickling on his cheeks. He cleared his throat and looked away, only grabbing the other's finger tips in attempt to give him a hand shake. "I-I'm Hiccup. Horrendous Haddockâ€|the third."

He raised an eyebrow. "Haddock. Like the fish?"

In his mind, he figured there was no way he'd forget that. And, it looked like he was starting to remember. His forest green eyes began to brighten and he smiled, his buck teeth showing slightly. Oh how he missed those cute beaver teeth.

"Yeah. Yeah, like the fish." Hiccup muttered.

The two stood there for the longest time just smiling at each other. It seemed like there was no one else untilâ€|

"Hey mistake!"

Snotlout still carried a black eye and a few bruises from yesterday. Jack looked him over and found this to be an improvement. It distracted from the pig nose and fat head. The brunette frowned as his eyes became dark at the sound of the voice.

'_After all this time_,_ he_'_s still bothering him?_' The older teen thought.

One would think that one would change over years and years. Of course, that didn't seem to be the case for the delinquent. Same old big body, same old chubby fingers, same old horrid behavior. Well, it

wasn't going to happen again. He swung one arm and leg around to become a wall between him and his Hiccup. This had to stop.

"Fuck off, Snotface! If I catch you torturing him again, I won't hesitate to throw you over a bridge! Do you understand!?"

The brute jumped back with wide eyes. "Y-yes!" He muttered, his voice cracking. Nobody had stood up to him like this with a threat like that.

"I asked ****do you understand**!**?" Jack shouted.

"Yes sir!" With his long but fatty legs, Snoutlout ran off school grounds in search for his twin sidekicks.

Hiccup stared up at his savior with a look of surprise. Nobody ever stood up for him before. Fishlegs tried once and it ended with his head stuck in a toilet. When Jack turned around, he didn't know what to say. He began stumbling over his words and twisting his hands around in an effort to explain his gratitude. His embarrassing attempt ended when he heard the other chuckle in amusement.

He shook his head. '_Still the same old Hiccup_.' Jack thought and stripped himself of his sweatshirt.

"Um, uh, what are you doing?" The brunette asked, his blush returning to his cheeks.

"This." The teen pushed down the blue t-shirt that he wore underneath and forced the hoodie onto his friend, smiling as he did so. "Wear this and they won't go near you."

Hiccup's fingers cupped over the end of his sleeves and he turned them over with a look of confusion. "Why do I ne-"

"They'll know you're under my watch. Just wear this and nobody will mess with you."

'_Hopefully_â€|'

* * *

><p>AN: More will be explained in later chapters. Can't explain everything in one chapter. No, that would be too nice of me.
- ADAM **

****Reviews = Motivation = Chapters****

7. Bullets

****A/N: I fell asleep! This was meant to be done yesterday but I fell asleep while writing it. Bahh. Anyway, I want to thank you all for the reviews! I've never gotten this many before and it really means a lot to me. Like...you don't even know. Anywho, on with the show.****

* * *

><p>He knew it was going to be a bad day from the moment he woke up, slipped on the sweatshirt in an angry manner, and looked in the

mirror.<p>

"Another day in paradise."

For the past week or so, he had been followed, stalked, even watched by the white haired freak. At first it was alright; nobody went around bullying him and he was the first in line during lunch. As the days went on, though, his threats lost their luster and Snotlout's smirks promised future wedgies. Other teens began to laugh whenever the two were spotted together on the school grounds and every sponge in the school was dyed black from Hiccup trying to wash away the horrid sharpie markings on his locker. 'Fag' and 'freak' were very popular amongst the other words they could use. Still, when he was with Jack, he always seemed to forget to tell him to go away; he didn't need him around. When those eyes melted right into his own, the other voices around them faded into nothing.

Of course, if anyone were to ask the brunet about his feelings towards the older teen, it would always be the same answer: "He's just a friendly pain."

Which was a nice way of saying he didn't care much for him. And it was a complete lie. Anyone with common sense and two eyes could see that it was the complete opposite. The way his green eyes batted, his fingers trying to wonder over to the other's pale ones only to be balled into fists at his side a moment later, even the way he laughed showed the true feelings he held. Hiccup had a little butterfly crush on Jack.

The fifteen year old would never admit such a thing and would stumble over his words to convince the confronter that he was straight. In which, he had to do several times.

With a sigh, he threw his backpack over his shoulder and walked down the stairs. Toothless looked up from his pillow in the kitchen, too tired at the moment to rush to his master's feet.

"Good morning, Toothless." His human said with a forced smile. "Want some sausage with your breakfast?"

His tail wagged slightly at the mention of food. As the small teen pulled out eggs, orange juice, and glorious sausage, the motivation to stand up was strong. Barking, he jumped up and stood by the human's side.

Hiccup chuckled and patted his dog on the head. "Hungry today, aren't we? Alrightâ€¦it'll be done soon."

The smell of it all was intoxicating, causing him to drool slightly as he made it. He whipped his mouth off on his sleeve as he turned the links around and scrambled the eggs. It was a miracle that all the pets that lived around the neighborhood didn't break down the door to get to it. It was also a miracle that nobody called to ask if everything was alright when his dad made his way down the stairs.

Stoick was rather large man. Not from overeating, but from muscles and big bones. Most of the Haddock family was built this way; big bone structure, firm muscles. It was almost funny to watch a Haddock go through a fun house after their child. Their large arms and wide

stomachs would get caught between pipes and punching bags. Of course, nobody laughed at a Haddock in fear of being sent to the hospital a moment later. Nobody laughed at a Haddock until Hiccup came around; three pounds, two ounces. Then, the family name didn't seem to mean much anymore. Unless you spoke it to the high school football coach.

The teen yawned and looked up at his father as he ran around looking for the rest of his uniform. "Morning, dad." He managed.

"Good morning, son. Have you seen â€œ"

"Your badge is on the desk in your office." He flipped over the eggs with slight ease.

Toothless barked and tugged at his master's sleeve. He was always the impatient type. Sitting back down when a hand was waved his way, he couldn't help but whimper.

Hiccup groaned, rolling his eyes as he made his own plate. "I know, bud. Calm down. You'll get your breakfast in a minute."

The boy could have sworn they got a vacuum cleaner when they adopted Toothless. It wasn't long before the food in his bowl was gone and he was begging for more. Every Thanksgiving, he was scared that the poor dog would end up in a turkey coma and never come out of it. He would sit there, poking at the pup's paws only to watch as they twitch for a moment. It really was the funniest thing in the world; Toothless' stomach hanging out, his tongue drooping from his mouth. If any unknowing stranger were to walk in on the holiday, they would have sworn the pet was dead.

He chuckled lightly as he watched his beloved dog scarf down two sausage links. Yup, they adopted a vacuum cleaner.

Stoick sighed as he sat down, quickly stuffing his face as he tried to speak. All he could make out was that there were leads on the gang violence and thieving downtown. His eyes went wide for a moment as he twisted his head toward the window, hearing a gunshot.

"What is it, Hiccup?" His father asked, looking out the window as well.

The brunet stared for a moment, only seeing Fishlegs and Jack coming up to the front door. He groaned and threw his backpack over his shoulder. "School."

"Have a good day, son. Make good choices!"

"I'll try, dad!" With that, he closed the door.

The walk to school was as awkward as it was almost every day. Hiccup walked between Jack and Fishlegs, all three completely silent. Every time the oldest teen tried to make a noise, the youngest would shush him into silence, placing a finger on his lips with the angriest look in the world. He would roll his eyes at the look and chew on the lollipop stick in his mouth that still contained small remains of what once was root beer candy.

When the school grounds came into view, not a single student was

around. A single teacher, the librarian, made her way up to the door. "See you after school." He whispered to his smaller friend who pushed his head away, his cheeks beat red.

"Y-yeahâ€|" His voice cracked slightly, causing him to clear his throat. "Whatever."

As he watched the teen shuffle up the steps of the school, he couldn't help but smile when Hiccup turned to him when he got to the door. It was almost like he wanted to reach out and pull him in. And, for the most part, Jack wanted him to. But there was no place for him in that world full of drama and homework, bells and whistles, pens and paper. He didn't belong in such an interesting world no matter how much he wanted to. No, his place was with the family, pick pocketing the rich and ransacking the richer.

With a wave and a smile, the blue clad member walked off to go fulfill his duties. The list in his head wasn't terribly long and hopefully would take up most of his day or, at least, until school was over.

He walked almost happily down the side of the school, making his way to the back alley. His mask bounced in his pants pocket and his bare arms swung slightly as he walked. It was weird not having a sweatshirt after having one for so long. It made him feel exposed. Rubbing his arms to try and get that same long sleeved feeling back, he turned the corner, bumping into what he thought was Snotlout. He opened his mouth to say something, anything but an apologize, and looked up. The sight of the red bandana wrapped around the being's bald head caused his mouth to close shut and his eyes to narrow.

There were a few other gangs in the area, not including his own. Of course, they didn't bother remembering the names of the others simply because they thought it gave them more power. Jack knew, though, what to look for when he was walking around. Pitch had taught him since day one; stay away from yellow shirts, stay away from sleeveless men, and definitely stay away from red bandanas.

Contact red eyes bore into his own blue contacts, hands shoving his shoulders. "Who do you think you are?" The man asked. He couldn't have been older than twenty-three.

"Hey, man, it was just an accident." Jack said as he put up his hands, hoping his mask wouldn't fly out or make itself known.

Two other members from the rival group put their cigarettes out against the brick wall, their hands traveling to the black metal that stuck out from their pants. He had never even held a gun before, but, he had been at the end of one many times. Sure, it was always held by one of his own and he knew that it wouldn't be shot at himâ€|that didn't make it less frightening, though.

He kept a straight face as he was shoved again. "If I were you, I'd best get outta here. Unless you want to deal with me."

"Cool your jets, I'm leaving, alright?" The seventeen year old mumbled, turning the corner. Guess he was taking the long way home.

Some say when you've been shot, you don't hear the gun go off. You don't even feel any pain until you look at the wound. Unless you've been shot in the head, of course. So, when Jack heard the shot, he knew that he wasn't hit. A small light on the ground in the corner of his eye caused dust to fly up into the air and his legs to stop.

"Don't tell me what to do!" The member snarled. "Next time, I'll put a bullet in your head! Understand?!"

The white haired teen turned to him and smiled slightly, surprising all three men. "Your point is crystal clear."

For the rest of the day, he couldn't get the image of their faces out of his head; eyes wide, mouths dropped to the ground, nostrils flared. He would chuckle while he rode the bus or walk the streets and caused others to look at him oddly. If only they could have seen those priceless faces.

Sixty-two dollars and seventy-nine cents sat at the bottom of his pocket by the time school was let out. Most, if not all of that went to Pitch. Not just because he was the leader, but he was better with money than the rest of them. He couldn't count the number of times he just wanted to buy things he didn't need. Clothes, food, dental care products, hot water, and shoes for the winter. That's all he needed from others. Pillows, blankets, and anything else that he needed he could get himself by his own means.

Hiccup rushed over to him, eyes wide at the busted lip Jack sported. "Oh gods, what happened to you?" He asked and looked for any other wounds. "Was this from the bullet?"

"You saw that?" He chuckled.

"W-well, yeah. Everyone saw it. We heard fighting and went to the windows and there you were with a gun pointed to your back." The brunet twisted his friend to check out his back, sighing in relief when there was no blood. "Gods damn it, Jack."

The older teen chuckled lightly as he turned back around. One moment it was like he hated him, the next, he was worrying warts onto his face. It gave him the slightest ray of hope that maybe, just maybe, he was remembering how important they were to each other.

He rolled his green eyes and looked up at him, clearly not impressed by the show. "You're going to give me gray hairs before I'm twenty."

"Oh, don't worry about me so much." Jack said, ruffling the smaller teen's hair. "Come on, let's get you home."

The walk home was not as quiet as the walk to school was. They asked each other how their day was, what they did, how he got the busted lip, and how the other carried a slight bruise on his chin. When they ran out of small talk, they resorted to walking in silence.

Hiccup looked around, watching mothers pick up their sons from bus stops with a heavy heart. His bottom lip curved into his mouth and served as a chew toy, his eyes surveyed the streets for something else to look at. Nothing seemed to come of interest until he looked

up. The way the light hit the white haired boy's eyes showed the lines of the contacts he wore. This sight brought a blush to his cheeks and questions to his mind; what was his natural eye color? Was it a darker blue? Was it green like his? Maybe it was brown.

His hand began to move out of his control, his fingers almost grazing Jack's pale ones. The seventeen year old didn't seem to blink at all, his eyes hardly even moving. It was almost like they were posing for him and that only made him even more lost. Only when he turned to the brunet did he look away. His hand balled into a fist and pulled itself back to his side.

"I, uh, um, I can explain."

Jack chuckled. "They're contacts. My real eyes are brown."

'_Oh gods_, _he knew_â€|' His cheeks turned bright red and his eyes snapped wide with utter embarrassment. "Uh, no! I wasn't looking at your eyes! I was looking at the sun, um, the sky! Yeah, the sky!"

Hiccup stuttered and stumbled over his words, his arms flailing as they tried to communicate his overly confused feelings and thoughts. With a sigh, he dropped his limbs and looked up into the unnatural blue pools that sat in his snow white skin.

He shook his head, unable to speak for a moment even though his mouth hung open. "Jackâ€|where do you go after you drop me off at home?"

The other shrugged, looking down at his nearly bare feet. "I go someplace where I belong."

"That's not a straight forward answer."

Not another word came from Jack as he continued to avoid his friend's green eyed stare. Hiccup sighed and grabbed the elder's arm, surprised at how toned it felt. He dragged him down the street, turning a few corners here and there until his house stood in front of them. Walking down the driveway, he ignored Toothless' happy barks and attempts to jump at him through the window.

He opened the wooden gate door to the backyard and lead the teen up to the rather large tree house that wasn't very high up. Jack remembered this tree house. He and Hiccup used to play in here some days when he didn't want to go to the playground. The floor was still littered with toys, all dust filled and rusted with time. Drawings hung off the walls as well as spiders. In the corner sat a small broom which the owner of the house used to dust away all the creepy crawlies and cobwebs. They coughed and sneezed, the taller of the two sitting down in his old usual spot.

"I'll be back with food, pajamas, and something to sleep on." Hiccup said and made his way back down the ladder.

Jack smiled and shook his head at the memories. Nurf gun bullets still stuck to Snotlout's second grade picture, water wings sat amongst the other pool supplies, all still blown up and ready for the water. It was almost as if he was a child again.

Out of curiosity, he turned to his side and dusted off a layer of grime to reveal something he forgot he had done for the longest time. There, carved into the woodwork were their initials, a simple plus sign connecting them.

J.O + H.H

He chuckled and traced the letters, whispering when his fingers lingered over the double h. "I hope you remember soonâ€¦you're killing me here."

* * *

><p>AN: Not my best chapter. Eh, I blame it on allergies. Spring does not like me. - ADAM**

Reviews = Motivation = Chapters

8. Drops

A/N: So, I've been a little sick lately. I hope it didn't effect my writing. Please tell me if it did. Enjoy.

* * *

><p>There is nothing more inviting than pictures of large men tackling each other into mud, huge trophies with golden footballs proudly displayed on top, and jerseys stained with grass. This was the sight he usually saw upon walking in the door. A few family photos and children's drawings were scattered on the walls but not many. Not enough to draw attention from the news clippings with bold headlines.<p>

Hiccup sighed slightly at it all as he walked down the hall to the closet. If any person foreign to the house were to open the hall closet door, they would scream and jump back in fear. Blankets, pillows, and many other things were all stuffed into the small space so tightly, it looked as if everything would come crashing out at any moment. Without even flinching, or caring for that matter, he reached in and pulled out a pillow, sleeping bag, and yoga mat. For the longest time, his mother did yoga, but, grew tired of it after he turned four.

Closing the door, he could smelled something coming from the kitchen. Baked ham covered in pineapple, fresh mashed potatoes, buttery corn on the cob. It was enough to make his mouth water. Another thing that came from the kitchen was humming. The humming of a song he knew all too well.

"Gobber?" The brunet called as he walked toward the kitchen. "Is that you?"

The humming stopped. "Ah, Hiccup! Welcome home! I was just making dinner. Your father won't be home till around midnight so, he asked me to come take care of ya until then."

Of course. Stoick never let him stay home alone. It was one of the many things he couldn't do. Number thirteen on that list, actually. Number three on the list of things that irritated him. He rolled his

eyes and hoisted the sleeping bag over his shoulder, opening it slightly by doing so.

"You know, I can take care of myself." He mumbled, leaning against the doorway. "I mean, it's not like I'm going to burn down the house or something."

Truthfully, he didn't mind Gobber's company at all. He rather enjoyed it. But, he just wished his father would trust him enough to leave him home alone even if it was just for a few hours.

The man looked down at his friend's son frowning slightly. "He's only doing this to protect you. It's not you he doesn't trust, it's everything around you."

Hiccup raised an eyebrow and shook his head, turning to leave out the back door. "Thank you for summing that up."

The smell traveled all the way out into the back yard and caused Toothless to start whining. Ham was one of his favorite table scraps, causing him to do anything to get it. As soon as the back door opened, the black lab ran right into the house. Gobber's voice could barely be heard over his senseless barking.

Carrying everything up the ladder was about as hard as it looked. The yoga mat sat awkwardly under his chin while the now unrolled sleeping bag began slipping off his shoulder. The pillow hung loosely from his teeth, going on it's last thread as he made it inside the tree house. He mumbled an apology and laid everything out.

"Here." The fifteen year old sighed. "Dinner will be ready soon. I'll come back with food when it is."

Jack shook his head, sitting on his makeshift bed. "You didn't have to do all this." He said, leaning back against the wall.

"I know."

The two sat silently next to each other, just enjoying each other's company. Every few minutes, the smaller teen would look at his watch and sigh while the other stared out the window seeming content. Time went by slowly, the hands in his watch not even moving as fast as a snail. It made him chew on his bottom lip and tap his finger impatiently.

His friend, however, was completely okay with the pace of everything. He even smiled a few times as he tried to look up at the stars. To him, it was about as close as the old days as he was going to get. It took every inch of energy and power not to kiss his cheek when he turned to him. Those freckles stared back at him, almost begging him to play connect the dots. There seemed to be more of them now and covered most of his skin. The light coming in from the house shined on his brown hair, showing the natural red highlights he always carried. But, as he looked closer, he could see a small spot there was never there before. A small, bald spot. Without thinking properly, he reached over and grazed his finger across it, gaining a jump from the scar's owner.

The brunet looked at him with wide eyes and a frightened expression. This, in turn, made him jump and return the frightened face. He

didn't really know what he had done; had he hurt him?

"I-I'm sorry." He said, turning his gaze down to his friend's small neck. "I justâ€¦I just was wondering what that was. I never noticed it before."

Hiccup slowly calmed down and turned away, his fingers absentmindedly playing with the hem of the sweatshirt. "It's fine." He whispered.

There were a few holes at the end of each sleeve, causing him to start picking at them instead. Threads popped out and began littering the floor as silence overtook them once more.

Jack rubbed the side and back of his neck; a new habit he developed whenever a situation became awkward or strange. He thought back to when they were kids and wondered if there was anything he had done to get such a scar. And, there was nothing. Granted, there were many times the Haddock teen had fallen over and scratched himself. It was always on the chin and elbows though, never on the head.

The question twirled in his head more times than he'd like to admit, making him completely zone out for a few minutes. He hadn't even noticed that Hiccup was already on the ground, walking into the house.

The pitter patter of nails and dog tags introduced Toothless as he made his way across the hall and into the living room, a large ham bone in his mouth. The teen chuckled at the sight. His babysitter was not that far behind, a plate in his real hand.

Whenever he saw Gobber, he reminded him of a patchwork quilt. His right leg was gone and replaced with an obviously fake replica as well as his left hand. Stoick used to tell stories about how his friend lost his limbs, the stories different each time he told them. A memory popped up in his head of him running around with the policeman's arm and laughing as he was chased. It was a fun game they used to play that now collected about as much dust as twister or monopoly.

"I'll be eating up in the tree house." Hiccup said, walking into the kitchen to make two plates.

The hiss of the television turning on was loud and made him flinch. "Are you sure?" Gobber asked. "I'm sure it's awful up there. Why don't you eat in here?"

"Ummâ€¦I'mâ€¦feeling nostalgic today." He lied through his teeth.

When the plates were full and his stomach started to rumble with hunger, he walked back outside and stared down the ladder. And he thought bringing stuff up to sleep on was hard enough. Still, he took in a deep breath and accepted the challenge. Holding a plate in one hand and one in between his teeth, he slowly made his way up the wooden boards. The silverware threatened to fall onto the ground below a few times, causing his heart to race. He popped his head up into the opening in the floor and sighed in relief when Jack grabbed his plate. Mumbling a 'thanks', he climbed in and sat next to him, starting with the juicy looking ham.

The white haired teen's fork hardly touched the plate. He pressed into his slab of ham and held it as if it was a lollipop. The sight didn't really disgust Hiccup more than it did worry him. This seventeen year old who carried himself with such grace and intelligence now sat next to him, eating like a barbarian. Juice dripped down his chin and dribbled a small river over his Adam's apple. He watched it slowly flow, his cheeks becoming beat red as he wondered what the otherâ€|

No. No, that was wrong. He wasn't supposed to think that way. He turned his head away from the delinquent and slapped his hand over his face. All he wanted to do now was become invisible or run away. Either one would be fine at the moment. Anything to create a barrier between him and the other teen.

Jack glanced at him, raising an eyebrow as he watched the red in his face drain away. It was actually rather amusing and he began to wonder what got him so worked up. He continued to look the brunet over even when he started eating.

The way he ate didn't change. He always was very elegant when he ate; pinky up without thinking, small cut chewable pieces, forkfuls that didn't spill when he brought them up to his mouth. It was almost a sort of dance whenever he did something. Whether it was eating or drawing, walking or cleaning; it was always with some sort of grace. Of course, it wasn't very graceful for long. A shoelace would get trapped under him or something would catch his attention away from his dance and he'd fall to the floor. Even then, it was still with elegance.

Hiccup was the most amazing, clumsiest dancer in the world.

He smiled as his eyes traveled back to his hair and set themselves on his scar that was barely seen under the hair. Slowly, his smile became nothing but a distant memory.

"Hic?" Jack asked, adjusting himself in his spot. "How did you get your scar?"

Just like that, the dance stopped. Hiccup kept his fork to his mouth for a second before lowering it to his plate. Leaning back against the wall, he ignored their shoulders and arms touching.

He shook his head and stared at the mashed potatoes. "I don't remember. But, my dad told me. I only know facts of what happened." He cleared his throat as he thought back to what his father told him.

"It was my seventh birthday and we were out of candy. Usually, on my birthday, I get to stay up and eat as much candy as I want. From what dad told me, Fishlegs ate the rest of it. So, my mom and I went to the store to get some more."

A small, sad smile crept onto his face, a soft scuff blowing past his lips. He began to play with the white and blue bracelet on his wrist as he continued. "I kept putting lemon drops in the basketâ€|"

* * *

><p>"Hiccup, sweetheart, don't you think you have enough lemon drops?" She asked, smiling down at her growing son.

_The now seven year old shook his head. "I love lemon drops, mum. They're my favorite." _

She let out a small laugh and nodded, looking down at the ten bags they had of the sour candies. Four bags of small, fun sized candy bars sat under it all; just in case he wanted some chocolate. Which was a rare occasion, but, it still happened.

_Hardly anyone was in the corner store. Just her, her small child, a shifty looking man, and a single cashier. It was a recipe of strangeness and it made her feel uneasy. Whenever the man started walking toward them, she'd grab her son's small wrist and drag him away to the frozen foods or the dairy products. _

_When they had finally gotten all that they needed, which was not just candy but special things for breakfast the next morning, she placed everything down and smiled at the cashier. _

_"That rains coming down pretty hard, isn't it?" The lady smiled, scanning things at a normal pace. _

_Hiccup shrugged and looked up at her; his head unable to be seen unless he was on his tip toes. "It's always raining." _

_"Is it? I haven't noticed?" _

"Oh, he's just a little sad. He's friend moved away a while ago and he can't seem to get over it."

_The seven year old looked around, the sound of footsteps becoming much more interesting than the conversation of two older women. Not too far away stood the man his mother had been keeping him away from. He looked down at his watch impatiently, his hand digging through his bag. _

_A hand was placed on his shoulder as he watched the strange person pull out a colorful mask and...what was that? _

"Come on, honey. Let's get home." His mother said, taking his small hand just as the man came toward them.

_The door closed behind them, shouts just barely making his ears. Hiccup looked up at his mother, noticing her frightened face and began to wonder if he should be scared as well. He tripped a few times as she started running and tried to hold her hand as best he could. _

_"Mom, what's wrong? What's going on?" He asked, getting the feeling that something or someone was following them. _

_"Just keep running, baby. Don't stop running!" _

_She violently turned down an alleyway, their house in sight. For a moment they both felt relieved. They were going to get home safely without getting any bumps or bruises.

_

Bang!

Bang!

_Hiccup was suddenly faster than his mother. She was nowhere in his vision. His heart sank into cold, icy waters as he looked down at his mother who laid on the ground. Lemon drops were scattered everywhere, some still bouncing to the ground. _

_A small crimson puddle began forming underneath her. He had only seen this in video games and movies. There was no way this was happening in real life. Thereâ€|there was just no way. This must be fake, a trick. Just like on television. _

_ "M-momâ€|?" He asked, walking over to her._

_She didn't answerâ€|or moveâ€|no sound whatsoever. _

_He leaned down next to her, shaking her shoulder. "Mommy, this isn't funny." _

_Tears formed at the corners of his eyes and silently began to pool over. Her body moved with his motions, everything becoming cold under his hand. He shook his head and grabbed her hand, trying his best to pull her up. _

_ "Come on, mom. I don't like this game. Get upâ€|" _

She didn't move.

_ "Mommy, get up." _

She didn't speak.

_ "I don't like this game anymore! Please, mommy, please! Get up!" _

_

_She didn't hold him and dry his tears. She just laid there unmoving. _

_

_He cried and held her hand tightly, not bothering to notice the man walking up to him. Hiccup screamed out for her and told her just how scared he was. And when she did not answer, he would shake her arm and order her to wake up. _

The click of the gun being cocked brought him back slightly and he whipped his head up to meet the colorful masked man. He felt numb as the gun was moved toward his head, his eyes wide with horror. This was it. He was going to die.

_ "I'm sorry, kid." _

* * *

><p>"Hiccup, oh god, I'm sorry!"<p>

Jack didn't know what to do. The brunet just suddenly started crying out of no where, sobbing really. As soon as he mentioned lemon drops, his mind seemed to travel somewhere else. It went off to some far distant place. When he had placed a hand on the teen, it seemed to

trigger something inside him, forcing him to start sobbing.

Hiccup mumbled misunderstood words and whipped his nose off on his sleeve. Somewhere within those jumbled sentences as a muffled apology which, the other understood right away.

The seventeen year old shook his head, pulling his friend close. "Shh, it's okay. There's no need to be sorry." He whispered to him, rubbing circles into his back.

Struggled gasps for air caused him to look down a few times. Red clashed with green when he looked into his eyes. He could feel his own begin to water at the very sight.

"It's alright, Hiccupâ€¦I'm here. You're okay, I'm here." Jack kept whispering, rocking him slightly.

The more he rubbed circles into his back, the quicker he calmed down. Quiet cries were all he heard amongst sniffles and gasps for air. The fifteen year old dug his head into his friend's chest and held onto him tightly, not even noticing the position they were in. Somehow, he had ended up laying in between the white haired teen's spread legs, curled up in a small ball.

Sleep slowly came over him and caused his eye lids to drop, his breathing becoming steady once more.

"I want my momâ€¦" He whispered.

Jack nodded, holding one of his tiny hands. Without thinking, he placed a small kiss on the brunet's head and held him even closer; trying to keep him warm from the cold rain that poured outside.

"I know, Hiccup. I knowâ€¦"

* * *

><p>AN: I know the ending seems a bit rushed, but, it's 12:26am and I'm tired. - ADAM</p>

****Reviews = Motivation = Chapters****

9. Notes

****A/N: I'm so sorry, guys. I can't believe I missed HiJack week...I'll try and make it up to you. Really.****

* * *

><p>The bird sat quietly next to the dirty plate and just stared at the two humans. Only one had moved throughout the whole night, making him believe that the larger human was dead.</p>

Both laid tangled in each others arms on the floor, the only pillow they had under the brunet's head. He had moved around many times during the night; twisting and turning, pushing and snuggling. It was the worst rollercoaster ride anyone could ever be on. At times, he would mumble a few things and curl himself into a ball. Other

moments, he would spread his body out on the floor. But, for now, he stayed peacefully on his side, an arm around the blue clad teen.

Jack's hand snaked it's way up to Hiccup's and rested right above it. This was the only movement he ever made when he slept.

During his first week in the gang, there was a fight over territory. Every night he could hear gun shots and hollered orders. It scared him stiff, keeping him mostly awake. Tooth, Aster, or Pitch would come in when it got too out of hand and would sooth him to sleep. There were a few times that week where they were found and whoever was consoling him that night would shoot the unwanted intruder until they were dead. It was the most frightening sight to the then eight year old. Now, it was almost sickening how he was used to it.

Hiccup yawned as soon as the cold skin collided with his. He stretched his arm and moved his body, picking up and resting his head on what he thought was the pillow. All he wanted to do was sleep in. Hopefully, neither his father nor Gobber would notice the time. He smiled as he tried to drift off to sleep once more, the sound of a bird flying off lulling him slightly. As his breathing slowed, he noticed that the pillow moved every few seconds, a small beating sound coming from within. It was calm and enchanting, pulling him in deeper. His eyes blinked open, showing him what exactly he was sleeping on. Jack's chest fell and rose under his cheek. For a moment, he allowed it all to happen; his eyes slowly dropping again, the older teen's arm weaving up to hold him closer.

But, as he world around him started to blur, he heard his father's words. '_It_'s unnatural_. _It_'s disgraceful_. _It_'s disgusting_!'

The brunet jumped away from his friend with a yelp, just missing the exit hole in the floor. "Oh my god, Jack! Seriously! What the heck!?"

The sudden yelp of the smaller boy forced him more awake than any cup of coffee could make him. His eyes were wide and he had indeed jumped a few inches into the air. Upon looking over the fifteen year old and seeing that he was unharmed, he smiled slightly and gave a soft chuckle.

"Heck?" He asked. "Fuck, are you three? The only people who say 'heck' are under the age of twelve. How old are you?"

Hiccup only glared at him. "Old enough! An-and what are you doing; going around holding people in their sleep! I-it's rude to just do that without asking first!"

"Well, I'm sorry." Jack couldn't help but laugh.

His cheeks were just so red and his glare was just so adorable, he didn't know what else to do. It was always the greatest sight to see him flustered. As he stood up, he opened his arms, and started making his way toward to poor boy. "Can we cuddle?" He asked with a slight pout.

"No we can't 'cuddle'! It's disgusting!" The brunet shouted and started retreating down the ladder. "Men aren't supposed to show that

kind of affection to other men!"

Toothless began barking and scratching at the glass sliding back door at the sight of his master. It wasn't at all late even if it appeared that way. His master would have enough time to toast some frozen waffles, get properly dressed, brush his teeth and hair, and still have enough time to bring him outside. Out of the corner of his eye, a white haired teen jumped down and out of the house that sat in the tree. His cheerful barking quickly became an angry growl as he watched the two converse almost heatedly.

As soon as the door opened, he jumped in front of his master, barking away at the strange human; his teeth showing and eyes wide.

"Toothless!" Hiccup yelled. "What are you doing!? Stop!"

The seventeen year old threw up his hands and slowly began backing away, wondering why the black lab wasn't biting his master's hands when he grabbed his collar. "Whoa, hey! Step off! I ain't gonna hurt him!"

Toothless' barking stopped, but his growls didn't waver. His owner and best friend kneeled beside him, scratching under his chin. "Toothless, he's a friend. It's alright, bud. He isn't going to hurt me."

It took a moment for the growling to stop and once it did, the snorting began. He snorted and shook his head at the guest, walking off to do his business. This was an outrage! He couldn't believe what he had just heard! Sure, the teen looked fine on the outside. But there seemed to be something about him he didn't like. He wasn't sure if it was look he sent his master or the smell of gun powder mixed with cool mint that flew off him. Maybe it was both.

The brunet shook his head. "I don't know why he got soâ€¦like that. He isn't usually attacking others unless they are attacking me."

Jackson stared at him, watching as his friend open the door all the way and walk in. He stood there not knowing what to do. Not knowing if he should follow or stay behind. For a moment, there was slight silence.

"Jack?" He heard coming from the kitchen. "Come on in. No real need to be shy."

In a way, there was. He knew how his father felt about not only homosexuals but about him as well. There were a few times when they were small where Stoick caught them holding hands and pecking each other's cheeks. The man's eyes would grow wide for a second before narrowing down at the taller child. If his father saw him, would he recognize him? Would he throw him out of the house and forbid that they have any sort of relationship?

Hesitantly, he allowed a pale, bare foot to step on the cool wood floors. A small shiver ran up his spin as he continued to walk in. He had only ever been in the brunet's room, so, this was all new to him. The gold trophies were smooth under his fingers as he lightly dusted them off, old pictures of a happy child caused him to smile with a

heavy heart.

Popping his head around the corner, Hiccup raised an eyebrow as he saw the other stare at the walls. "Whatâ€¦are you doing?"

The white haired teen looked at him, pulling his hand away from the photograph he was dusting off. "You guys don't know how to keep a house, do you?"

"We do. I just haven't dusted in a while." He muttered, turning back to the kitchen.

His backpack laid in the corner and four toaster waffles jumped right out of the slots. Jack walked in, staring at the other as he picked them out with paper towels. When he was waved over, he took his seat across from his friend.

For some odd reason, they kept finding themselves in the same awkward silence. Every once in a while the sound of a knife and fork hitting against a plate would be heard. Hiccup had a certain way of eating waffles; a nostalgic way. He'd cut them into neat strips and dunk them in a small cup of syrup. Of course, he never used his hands. Even when he ate French fries, he never used his hands. It was almost like Swan Lake was playing out in front of him.

'_Breakfast and a show_â€¦_very nice_.' He thought to himself.

The way he ate his meal was much, much different. He held one in his hands and quietly nibbled on it, eyes fixated on the brunet in front of him. At a glance, it looked like he had merely zoned out. And, he acted as if he was as well, looking surprised when the teen finally spoke up.

"So, Jackâ€¦" He started, a small drop of syrup on his bottom lip. "Are you home schooled?"

Jack shook his head. "No. I'm not schooled at all." Most of which was a lie. He was schooled â€" in subjects he didn't want to take part in but schooled nonetheless.

"Well, then shadow me today."

"Excuse me?" He asked, raising an eyebrow as he shoved the rest of a waffle into his mouth.

The fifteen year old nodded with a look of complete seriousness. "Come to school with me today and just follow me around. If you like it, then I'll sign you up tomorrow."

Follow him around a school? What would Pitch think about this? Would he even know? Sighing, he agreed.

The walk to the building seemed longer. He figured it was the forced on shoes and crisp, clean clothes weighing him down. Fishlegs kept glancing over at the boy, hardly believing it was really him. Hiccup had thrown so many stuff at him; new shirt, new pants, new shoes, a hat, a bar of soap. He didn't look like the same person after all that.

Teachers and students alike stared at him as he walked through the

halls. Girls giggled, boys whispered. Still, not a single person kept their eyes off of Jack. Hiccup sighed and shook his head as they sat down in his first class, Health. A few cheerleaders waved, giving their best smiles to his white haired friend.

Jack wiggled his fingers in their direction and showed off his surprisingly white teeth. Honestly, with how greasy his hair was, Hiccup was taken back by the possible fact that he might own a toothbrush.

"I think they like me." He whispered to the shorter teen.

"I know they like you." The other whispered back. "There's a few more minutes before the bell rings. Why don't you go talk to them?"

He shook his head with a smile and turned to play with the end of his sleeve. It was weird having crisp new clothes. All of his were tattered and stolen from yard sales. "Nah, I'm good for right now."

The cheerleaders slowly stopped their waves, frowning as they turned back to their desks. It was clear that nobody ever turned them down. Well, until now, at least.

Hiccup pulled out his small, green notebook, his eyes of the same darker color paced back and forth across the pages as they followed his hand. Small details fled Jack's mind over the years. Like how his friend stuck his tongue out, biting it when he thought things through. How he bounced his leg when he got excited about his own writings. And, more importantly, how he wrote with his left hand. Hardly ever had he seen someone write with their left hand and he was amazed by the drawings he could make with it. The scales on each dragon, the freckles on every human being in his book; the details he could make were simply astonishing! And here he thought that left handed people had it rough.

He smiled as he leaned back in his chair, peeping over the brunet's shoulder. Whenever he wrote something in pen, misspelled words were scratched out and the ink would smudge all over the page from his constant moving. But, as he watched the left hand twirl with ease, he saw that not a single word was scratched out. Everything was written perfectly. Some words were even written in a language he couldn't understand. How much has he learned within those years they were apart?

Jack raised an eyebrow as he watched Hiccup flip to the back of his book and tare out an untouched page. His hand didn't move gracefully anymore. Instead, it seemed to take on an angry mind of it's own. '**STOP WATCHING YOU CREEP**' was written in big bold letters. The white haired teen chuckled and leaned back in his chair.

"Alright, alright. I get the hint." He muttered with a grin.

Hiccup crumbled the paper in his hand and slipped it into his pocket. Sometimes, he wondered if Jack really did get the hints. The signs he kept dropping. The rolling of the eyes whenever he opened the door and Jack stood there with the stupid grin he always has, the scuff he let out when he walked up to him after school, seeing almost every girl talking to him. He wasn't really getting the hint that he wanted to be alone. That he didn't really need him anymore.

Snotlout kept his distance. Sure, the usual crumpled paper ball or snarled word would be thrown around here and there, but, there was no physical attack. Tuffnut seemed to back off as well, being the main man in throwing paper planes at his head.

Every few minutes during class, Hiccup had to keep showing Jack the note. Of course, the seventeen year old would laugh and wave it off, shooting him his usual smile. The brunet would stare at him, glare at him, and turn away back to his notebook. Honestly, these—these _tickles_ inside of his stomach were getting really annoying really fast.

Lunch was no better. Fishlegs never looked more awkward. Girls beyond girls sat at their table, all focusing their attention on the boy with the unnatural blue eyes. Hiccup and him were pressed up against the wall so much, it was hard for them to reach their food. Jack only smiled and chuckled, leaning against his younger friend at times.

By the end of the day, it was really starting to get out of hand. He turned to his fans and lifted his hands in defense. "Alright, girls, alright. I have to go home now."

Some of them begged him to come home with them. Others crossed their arms in fury. '_This is ridiculous_—' Hiccup thought to himself and pulled the taller teen's arm, dragging him away from the school's parking lot.

"You've only stayed over once and you're already calling it home?" Fishlegs asked. "I've stayed over plenty of times and I still call it Hiccup's house or the Chief's house."

Jack shrugged with a slight smile. "It's a much better home than where I live."

"And where _do_ you live?" Both boys asked as they stopped in their tracks.

But, he didn't give an answer. He simply sighed, shot them a sad smile and looked off down the street a ways.

When they came to the corner, Fishlegs said his goodbyes and walked off down the opposite road. The rest of the walk home was silent save for the sound of a few birds chirping and a car driving by here and there. Hiccup walked Jack down the driveway and checked the backyard for any signs of his father, Gobber, or anyone else.

"I'll bring you dinner tonight." He said and opened the gate. "Just stay up there and be quiet, alright?"

Jack nodded. "Fine, fine. Hey—" He turned to him, raising an eyebrow. "Why do I have to stay in the treehouse?"

Hiccup didn't give him an answer. Instead, he mumbled a 'see you later' and walked on inside. Toothless looked up from his place in the hallway and stared at his master before yawning. It was clear by the look of his belly, his father had a guest over. Whenever he did, both Stoick and his guest would feed him table scraps or treats until he quiet literally passed out.

The sounds of his father and another man talking fluttered in from the kitchen. This other voice didn't belong to Gobber and only sparked up his curiosity. He walked in almost hesitantly.

"Ah, Hiccup!" Stoick boomed when he looked up and saw his son. "Welcome home, son. You remember Mr. Hofferson, of course?"

Mr. Hofferson was a tall man and not as large as Stoick, but still much larger than Hiccup. The blonde man looked over with a smile and a slight wave. "Hello."

The fifteen year old sent the same gesture back, raising an eyebrow at his father. He remembered the name. The man, not so much.

Stoick cleared his throat and nodded. "Well, we were planning a little get together. Like the old days. It's been a long time since you've seen Astrid and maybe it's time you two caught up."

* * *

><p>AN: Whenever I read anything that has to do with How to train your Dragon, I read it in David Tennant's voice. I've been listening to too many HTTYD audio books. - ADAM

>

Reviews = Motivation = Chapters

10. Drinks

A/N: Sorry the chapter is so short. I had to pack up some things. I'm going down to the family's camp for a few weeks. But, while I'm down there, I'll be bringing a notebook and I'll be handwriting new chapters to post when I get back. Since, you know, no internet by the lake.

* * *

><p>For the first time in a little over three days, the ache in her mouth wasn't that bad. She had tried everything; cold drinks, warm drinks, even ignoring the pain didn't work. Who would have known an aquarium would have soothed her into such a deep, relaxed state?<p>

She kneeled on the chair, staring mindlessly at the small clown fish that swam about. Her brother kneeled next to her and watched a few others go about their daily lives as well. Every few minutes, the blonde haired child would turn to watch her little friend and bump her glittery, pink fairy wings into the slightly older boy. He would, in turn, groan and push them away with one finger as to not get glitter all over himself.

Their mother sat patiently a few seats down, flipping through an old celebrity magazine. One of her legs laid on top of the other, her foot bouncing slightly as she waited for her daughters name to be called. Surprisingly, they were the only one's in the waiting room. It seemed every time they went to the dentist, the place was usually packed with crying babies and whining children. Yet, there was no one else there. Maybe it was because of the fact that it was so

late.

The receptionist yawned as she walked in, holding a clipboard loosely in her hands. "Sophie Bennett?" She asked.

"Right here." The other answered, smiling as he children jumped off the chairs. She held her hand out to her youngest. "Come on, Soph. Time to get your teeth checked."

The two year old giggled and took her mother's hand happily, almost skipping into the dentist's office. Her brother shoved his hands into his pockets and followed them. All around stood pictures of fishes, flowers, and fairies. Some were drawn by other children who had visited. Others were professional paintings done just for this office to help calm little kids.

"Toothy!" Sophie shrieked happily when she saw her dentist swirl in her chair.

Tooth smiled down at the girl, tucking her hair behind her ear. "Hello to you too, little one. I hear something's wrong with your teeth. How about we sit on up here and see what's going on."

Sophie did not hesitate. Unlike most children, she loved the dentist. The feeling of having nothing else in your mouth, the minty-bubble gum taste that stuck there for a while, the sticker she got afterwards to add to her collection. It was hard to make her stay still as Tooth turned on the light and stuck her gloved fingers in.

Nothing seemed to be wrong. Her teeth were perfect. No black spots, not plaque. But something about that red spot in her gums made her worry. Her finger scrapped over it slightly, causing the child to whimper in pain.

"Sophie, sweetie." She said. "Did you hit your mouth on something or bump something against it?"

The blonde nodded. "My toothbrush."

"Ahh. I see. Well, it's nothing to worry about." Tooth snapped her gloves off and threw them away, looking up at her favorite patient's mother. "Her gums are a little bruised from getting hit with her toothbrush. Keep her away from acidy foods and no sweets."

Miss. Bennett nodded. "Of course. Thank you, Miss. Anna."

"Thank you!" Sophie beamed.

Tooth waved and smiled as they left, giggling at certain questions the youngest had for her mother. When they had completely left, she turned in her chair and stared at the computer screen. She blinked at the number of appointments she had that day, which, weren't many at all. Clicking on the next day, she sighed and rubbed the bridge of her nose. Booked from the time she got in till the time she got out.

There weren't that many of those types of days. In fact, she could count on one hand how many times she had a full day in a month. But she still smiled and closed out of her appointment book. She loved

her job more than anything else. Even more than she loved the 'family' she was a part of some would say. The computer sung as she held the power button down, the room becoming darker than it usually was. Her ears rang as everything became silent for the most part. The florescent light above her hummed and the sound of a few keys being punched from the computer next door seemed to calm her down. Just something about utter silence didn't seem right to her.

****_Briiiinnnnnggg_****

****_Brrriinnnnngggg_****

Her cell phone vibrated next to the computer, making her jump in surprise. She looked down at the picture. An egg. With a sigh, she allowed it to ring a few more times before flipping it open and answering it.

"Hello?" She groaned.

There was a pause on the other line. A faraway group laughed in the background, the sound of glasses being placed down underneath it all. "Toothâ€¦Iâ€¦I need yaâ€¦"

"Why do you need me, Aster? Can't find your car again?" Tooth twirled in her chair, grabbing her purse as she did so.

"No, no, I see itâ€¦" He slurred. "Jus' can't drive it. North won't let me." A voice boomed on the other side, saying something she couldn't understand. "Ah, rack off! I'm fin'!"

Ever since they could drink, Aster and Tooth always went to the Blue Goose Tavern. It was the place to be. Everyone who was anyone went to the Blue Goose whether it was just to hang out or if it was to drown your sorrows in the best drinks in the state. If the train went by while you were eating or drinking, Old Mike would throw the bill in the shredder while everyone chanted. As soon as the blades began cutting the paper, the whole tavern would cheer, screaming the word 'train' over and over again.

When Old Mike died, the place didn't seem to be the same. He left it to his son who eliminated the free train drinks and snacks. One by one, usual costumers left and day by day, the place started to fall into ruins. There was no friendly smile when you walked in. There was no 'hey, how's it going' when you sat down to order. After a while, Old Mike's son just abandoned the place. That is, until he found a buyer.

Nicholas was a large man with a thick accent and an even thicker beard. With a hearty laugh, he signed the papers and fixed up the Blue Goose good as new. Of course, when people started coming back, it was hard for others to understand him. Nicholas only knew a few words in English but the accent hardly let on what he was trying to say. When Tooth finally started coming back, she gave him lessons, taught him how to read, write, and speak English enough for people to understand him. Over the years, he had earned the nickname 'North'. Well, not really so much earned as it was given to him while Aster had drank one too many drinks.

Tooth sighed as she waved to her receptionist before walking out the

door. "I'll be there soon. Give North your keys."

"Bu' Tooth-"

"Aster." She said firmly. Tooth was not one you'd want to argue with.

"Give North your keys."

"Bu-"

"_Now_."

The Australian heaved a long sigh before the sound of keys jingling and slamming on a counter came into play. North laughed as he took them, saying something along the lines of taking care of his 'baby'. Tooth smiled in victory, beaming actually. "Alright, I'll be there in a minute!" With that, she hung up and pulled out of the driveway.

Truthfully, it wasn't that far of a drive. The Blue Goose Tavern was maybe a mile or two away and thankfully there was no other car to be seen. Which made her start thinking of horror movie scenarios of little girls in the middle of the street or zombies out to eat her soon to be rotting flesh. Her heart started pounding and her foot took notice, pressing down harder on the gas peddle. No. No, there was no way she was ending up in a God awful place like Silent Hill. Screw that; screw the speed limit, screw the police. She wasn't going to let anything like that happen.

Pulling up to the building brought back so many memories. Most blurry, some clear as day. But mostly blurry. She'd never admit it to anyone else that she enjoyed five too many drinks. The only people to ever know this would be Aster and North. And hopefully, it stays that way.

She was greeted with a warm smile and outstretched arms. "Ah, Toothie! So glad you made it!" North beamed.

Aster did not look as pleased. He glanced over his shoulder and quickly turned back to the bar, downing another glass of spiked egg nog; his favorite drink. Tooth let out a soft sigh before sitting next to him and placed a hand on his shoulder.

"Alright, what happened?" She asked, watching North making her usual rainbow cocktail.

He shook his head as he stared down at his glass. Truthfully, he didn't want to think about it let alone talk about it. "Can we jus' go home?"

"After this one drink."

A group of completely drunk idiots decided to try their best at the new popular dance and tried even harder to sing along with the Korean song in the corner. The tipsy gathering of girls not too far away laughed and pointed, declaring that they were doing it wrong and that their grandmothers could do better. Tooth smiled as the sound of a train whistle interrupted the constant retorting of the groups. As the building shook, everyone began to cheer, some even chanting

'train' as black smoke and metal passed by the windows. North placed her drink down happily.

"One _free_ rainbow." He said, sending her a wink.

She giggled back and waved him away, taking the fancy glass in her other hand. "Thank you, North. It's been a while."

Aster shook his head as North walked off, looking out the window at the train that passed. He remembered riding a train as a child with his father. Once a week during the summer, the two of them would ride down to the beach. They would always go to the bar car first and grab themselves each a banana split with chocolate sauce, whipped cream, and crunched nuts. What he would do to go back to those days.

"Alright, Aster." Tooth said as she swirled her straw around. "Tell me what's on your mind."

"You're a dentist. No' a therapist." He looked at her, his eyes feeling heavy as he did.

She stared at him rather firmly and almost had the nerve to slap him upside the head. "Yes, I am a dentist. But I'm also your friend."

He sighed and shook his head again, looking back at his drink. Ever since Jack agreed to get close to that boy, she had been jumping down his throat. "Nothin' is wrong. Jus' tired an' wanna go home."

"Are you afraid Jack is going to get hurt? You can trust m-"

"I jus' wanna go home, Anna!"

Hardly anyone used her real name. She could count on one hand the number of times Aster had called her by that. It was normal for patients to call her by her birth name, even neighbors. But never did it come from North, Jack, or the familyâ€|hardly ever did it come from Aster.

He rested his head in his hand, clearly upset. His shoulders shook, his Adam's apple bobbed, his lips even quivered. "Jus'â€|jus' bring me homeâ€|"

"Alrightâ€|" She whispered with a nod. "I'll take you home."

* * *

><p>AN: Alright, tomorrow, I'm off on an adventure! Be good, don't bash, blah blah blah. - ADAM**

Reviews = Motivation = Chapters

11. Shoes

**A/N: Hey everyone, I'm baaaaaaaaaaaaacccccccckkkkkk. The lake was pretty cool. I got to see Hummingbirds for the first time. And, I don't think you understand. I LOVE those little things. Just...I love hummingbirds. Anywho, I'd like to thank AlexJohnD for helping me. Because I hiccuped all over the place. Yes. Hiccuped. My little

brother started saying it and now I can't stop saying it either.
Hiccured: messed up. But, yeah. Uh. Enjoy?*

* * *

><p>As soon as the light switched on, a world of color exploded in her face. Paintings " finished and unfinished " laid against chairs, walls, even the ceiling. It was a rather big house, much like her own, but still small against actors' mansions.<p>

A colorfully assortment of bottles hung from the dinning room ceiling like a chandelier made of large, glass crayola crayons. When the door closed behind her, they clanked together with an awkward sound that she just loved. During the day, whenever the light shined through the watercolor painted living room windows, a rainbow would be projected in every place the light could reach. Tooth had tried explaining just how amazing and artistic Aster's house truly was, but, nobody believed that someone with such a gray walled job could be just as she's described.

The Australian sighed as he kicked his shoes off and plopped onto the white couch. "Home sweet home." He slurred, his eyes closing into the comfort.

Tooth nodded and sat on one of the black living chairs across from the couch. "Yeah." She whispered, looking around. "You haven't done anything new."

"Haven' needed too." He exhaled. "Looks good as it is."

She nodded once more. This wasn't a lie, the place was beautiful as it was already. But, there were a few blank spots on the walls that made her fingers twitch. Her bottom lip curled up into her mouth as she looked back over at her friend, not knowing what else to say. No. She knew what to say. Or rather, what to ask. It was the matter of asking it that she didn't know how to do. Should she just come right out and ask it or beat around the bush and make small talk, coaxing him into relaxation?

Finally, she took a silent, deep breath and smiled. "So, how was work today?" She asked cheerfully.

Aster turned and looked at her, making a face of 'isn't it obvious' as he did. "Wha' do ya think, Tooth?" he turned away and placed his hand on his face, trying to massage the muscles behind his skin. "It was horrible. Had an attack, everyone decided to ge' hur' todayâ€|"

He closed his eyes as he tried to still his now overly beating heart. It hadn't surprised him in the least as he felt his body flow into a panic attack. The day was full of them ever since he saw that boy in the emergency room. The chart the nurse gave him gave most of the information; his next patient was male, he had broken his leg and arm from falling off a roof, he couldn't feel much in either limb. It seemed like a normal day, even if everyone was busier than normal. But then, when he pulled back the curtain, he saw those eyes. Those eyes. They were green eyes. Green eyes that belonged to a child. They shined like any other child's eyes, only, they were pleading with him. They were baring into his own set of grass fields. Aster had worked with many people before, treating everyone he could.

And he had seen children come out of the hospital many times, both with smiles and in caskets. Never, though, had he ever treated a child. His hands began to shake at the memory of stuttering into the phone, calling for someone else to cover for him. He could never forget those eyes. They were just like just like

"Aster. Are you alright?" Tooth asked, sympathy sown into her voice.

Slowly, he returned from the recent memories. He cleared his throat as he sat up. "Y-yeah" He sniffled, rubbing a finger under his nose. "I'm fine. Jus' tired."

She forced a smile and nodded. "Yeah. I am, too."

When Aster staggered to his feet, Tooth quickly jumped up and wrapped an arm around his waist, helping him up the stairs. The way he slightly giggled at the touch made her smile and remember those weeks before college when they had first met. It wasn't that long before the first day of the semester, two weeks was it? Possibly three. The small city seemed odd to her at first; being as she was used to forty story company buildings around each corner. Her roommate at the time invited her to a party held at the Blue Goose Tavern, insisting that it'd be a great place to make friends. And indeed it was.

The second floor wasn't as colorful as the first. Black and white photographs hung on the walls, no older than ten years old. Most were of Jack, Tooth, and a few other 'family' members. Others were of Aster with them, smiling. She smiled back at the photos, pushing the master bedroom door open with her foot. Aster mumbled and slurred incoherent words as he fumbled across the floor and onto his bed. He curled up, hugging one of his pillows with slight childness.

"I'm alright, Toothy." He muffled into the pillow. "Jus' need sleep"

Tooth sighed and smiled, putting a gentle hand on his shoulder. "I'll see you tomorrow during the meeting. And Aster" She bit her lip and stayed silent for a moment. Finally, she shook her head. "just know you can talk to me anytime. Alright?"

"alright."

* * *

><p>"Dad, before the party can we uh, you knowtake down all the sports memorabilia?"<p>

It wasn't that Hiccup hated all the unwashed jock straps and news clippings, but, it was rather embarrassing to have people over with all that gracing his home's walls. It had taken him a few years to get used to having Gobber over with all that and he was supposed to get used to it in just a few hours? No. No way. He wasn't doing it.

Stoick cleared his throat as he looked over the list of things they would need for the small party. "Why would I take it all down? Those are all my achievements."

Hiccup looked out into the hallway from his seat in the kitchen and

began to wonder just where his father's high school diploma was. After all, wouldn't that be considered an achievement? His eyes slowly moved from the hallway walls, out the window, and toward the old tree house. The light was off but somehow, he doubted Jack was actually asleep.

"It's just a bit embarrassing is allâ€|" Hiccup whispered as he trailed off into his own thoughts.

He often wondered what life was like for other people. Was the cashier really having a good day? Maybe that child alone on the swings is waiting for their friend. Sometimes, others would give him a small indication about what their life is like, what they are really thinking, how they were really doing. He even could tell when his father was lying or sad which is harder then it sounds. But Jackâ€|he couldn't read anything off of Jack.

He had muscles, which suggested he worked out. Yet, whenever Hiccup saw him, he was being a bum. He flashed girls an overly annoying charming smile but never asked any of them out. His facial expression stayed pretty much the same and nothing he wore gave him a sense of Jack's home life. Well, his lack of shoes did make him wonder even harder. Ugh. This was confusing. If his father wasn't in the room, Hiccup would be ripping his hair out.

Hiccup wrinkled his nose in thought, gaining Stoick's attention. "Son? Is something wrong?"

"No, I'm just thinking." He scratched his hairline and turned to the large man.

Stoick smiled slightly and looked back down at the list in his hands. "Excited about seeing Astrid again, are you?"

Hiccup blushed at his father's comment. "A-a little. I haven't seen her in so long, I forgot what she looks like and things."

"Well, I'm sure not much has changed." This is what Stoick was hoping for, at least.

Many times he had talked to the fathers and mothers of his son's classmates; setting up dates and other such things. He thought that since Hiccup never took a step forward in trying for a relationship, he might as well give him a shove in the right direction. Within his middle school year, Hiccup had been on nine dates. Four dates in Freshmen and Sophomore years. By now, Stoick figured, he should have a steady girlfriend.

In a strange and awkward way, Astrid was his last hope in his son ever having a girlfriend.

Hiccup yawned and stood up. "I'm gonna head off to bed."

"Alright. Goodnight, Hiccup."

"Night!" The brunet called from the hallway.

When he walked into his room and closed the door, he looked back at it and stared at the picture taped to the dark wood right above the knob. It was of his mother and him at the park. Both smiling, both

happy, both alive. A slight smile played on his lips. Bringing his fingers up to them, he kissed them lightly before lightly placing them on his mother's head. This was his nightly ritual.

"Night, mom." He whispered.

In truth, Hiccup wasn't tired. Even after he had stripped down and put on his pajamas he still wasn't sleepy. The warmth and comfort the bed gave off didn't seem to ease him into even daring to close his eyes.

For hours he laid there staring at the ceiling. He listened with closed eyes as his father walked down the same hallway and entered his own bedroom. Hearing this, a small memory came to him. It wasn't much and was even slightly choppy in some areas, but it was a part of his life and he flowed into it without hesitation.

He remembered boots much too big for his small feet and a coat that encased him like a turtle's shell. A stuffed dragon which he still held onto during lonely nights. A sparkling smile full of kindness and acceptance that moved with a voice he couldn't quiet place. The words that came out were jumbled but made him smile all the same. Then, he heard four taps in the back of his mind. And then it sprung back to life again.

Tap

Tap

Tap

Tap

The sound rang in his ears and forced him to open his eyes. His mouth felt dry as he smacked his lips together, his hand whipping away the drool line that froze to his cheek. When he heard the tapping once more, he looked up at his window to see Jack smiling his charming smile. His white hair spiked up everywhere and, even from where he sat on his bed, he could see the other's brown roots showing.

"Hey Hic!" The seventeen year old whispered when he finally opened the window. "Mind if I come in?"

Hiccup pressed his lips together tightly as he watched Jack step through without even getting a yes or no. "I don't think my opinion matters on whether you can come in or not."

"I just woke up and I can't fall back to sleep." He said, sitting at the foot of the brunet's bed.

They stared at each other in silence for at least ten minutes; Jack shooting him a smile and a chuckle, Hiccup rolling his eyes every time he did. It wasn't until Toothless came walking in that he finally said something.

"Well?" He shrugged, petting the black lab when he jumped onto the bed. "What do you want me to do about it?"

"Entertain me."

"What?" For some reason, a chill crawled up his spine and caused him to bring his blankets up over his chest and shoulders.

Jack laughed. "You heard me, you turtle. Entertain me."

Hiccup didn't know much about entertaining himself let alone other people. Movies and video games were completely out of the question seeing as his father would wake up almost instantly at the loud noise. Then, it hit him. It was a small game he played in middle school on the first day.

"Twenty questions." He said. "You ask me twenty questions about myself and I'll ask you twenty questions about yourself."

And the game was on. The first ten to fifteen were easy questions. Favorite colors, favorite animals, favorite foods. Hiccup couldn't help but chuckle and groan when Jack talked about his favorite food: cheese pizza with chocolate pudding. Something about it seemed familiar and it tugged at him slightly as the game continued. As the questions went on, the two soon found themselves laying on the bed, Toothless snuggled in between them as they stared at the ceiling.

The oldest of the two chewed the inside of his cheek as he thought of his final question, his teeth baring into a childlike grin when it came to mind.

"Alright, alright, alright, I got one." Jack chuckled. "What was your first kiss like?"

The fifteen year old blinked as he stared at the ceiling. "I've never kissed anyone before."

Jack's eyes seemed to go wide at the comment and he turned his head to look at the younger teen. Something inside him dropped almost like a metal pan hitting a kitchen floor. It was true. He could see it in his face. Hiccup couldn't remember a thing. The white haired boy bit his lip and turned back to the ceiling.

"I see." Swallowing, he smiled again and chuckled. "Maybe it's because you're such a nerd."

"Shut up."

"Your turn."

"Alright."

Hiccup cleared his throat and thought hard. This was the last question in the game. It had to be good. Finally, he smiled. "Why don't you wear shoes?"

The question seemed to take him by surprise. Jack turned his head to him. "I do wear shoes."

The brunet turned his head toward him as well. "Only when I force them on your feet for school."

Jack sighed as he thought it over. The question itself seemed harmless but the answer was deeper than he thought anyone would

expect. He looked down at his bare feet, taking note of the grass that dried and stuck to his soles.

"I don't know." He muttered. "Maybe becauseâ€|I don't want to walk another mile in them."

"Walk another mile?" Hiccup whispered.

"Yeah." Jack wiggled his toes and thought back to his early years. Before the Family. During the time that was now a dark hole in the other's memory. "Nobody could walk a mile in my shoesâ€|"

* * *

><p>AN: I asked the same question to myself. Why doesn't Jack wear shoes? Then I thought about it. 300 years ALONE. Everybody IGNORING him. All those miles he has walked in that life. And then after becoming a Guardian, he threw those shoes away so he wouldn't have to walk another mile in them. Yeah, sure, he didn't have them as a human but that's understandable. Poor family, more than likely sold them for food. But, after all that, becoming Jack Frost and seeing people in shoes, I just thought he'd at least steal a pair. Eh, that was what I thought. I could be completely wrong and over analyzing it. Anyway, yeah. - ADAM**

Reviews = Motivation = Chapters

12. Languages

A/N: So, I've been thinking a lot during this and...I need to stop thinking. Seriously, I have **_way_**** too many ideas. Like AU ideas. Here's a small list for JUST HIJACK: Portal!AU, Bioshock(1,2,and infinite)!AU, HungerGames!AU, Fatal Frame(project zero)!AU, Zombie!AU. That's hardly the tip of the ice burg. But, should I do any of these? If so, which one? Anyway enjoy.**

* * *

><p>"You want to what?"

Jack twisted his pinky around, digging out the remains of chlorine filled water from his ear. There was _no way_ he could have heard that correctly. The water in his ears must have swished the words and jumbled them. He looked over at Fishlegs who was doing the same, stuffing his sausage like finger into his ear and twisting it around. It was clear he thought the same; water infested ears.

Hiccup rolled his eyes at the two, snapping off his swimming cap. "You heard me. I want to join the football team."

"Uh, Hiccup," Fishlegs' feet shifted and he began to cower. The echoed voices of Tuffnut and Snotlout began filling the tiled locker room. "I don't think that's such a good idea." He whispered.

The three of them silently turned away from one another, rummaging through their lockers. As Snotlout walked into one of the small shower stalls, Fishlegs glanced over at his childhood friend with a look of complete worry. He knew what it was like trying out for a sports team. The coaches are rougher than they are during class or

practice and every team member laughs while you try your hardest. Trying out for the baseball team was hard. And neither Snotlout nor Tuffnut were part of the team. Fishlegs could only imagine the hazing Hiccup would have to go through during the process.

The rough, but yet calming sound of the shower head spewing water replaced the awkward silence. Tuffnut horribly failed "even if he'd never admit it" at singing as he jumped into the only other shower stall, throwing his clothes over the door and onto the floor.

Fishlegs took this opportunity to tip toe over to the brunet, his mouth awkwardly inches from his ear as he whispered. "Snotlout would completely crush you if he found out. I don't think you should do it."

Hiccup sent his friend a look, his eyes a mixture of hate, hurt, and annoyance. "Gee, thanks, Fishlegs. I feel the support."

"Trying out for the football team and trying out for the baseball team are two different things!" He tried to explain. "Snotlout and Tuffnut are both on the team. They'll be bullying you all the time!"

"Like they don't already do that?"

"It's serious, Hiccup. What if they beat you after practice? What if you don't even get in?"

"I have to at least try."

"But you have no experience!"

"Yeah, you need training, little turtle."

Both teens turned to Jack who was now fully dry and completely clothed. The seventeen year old blinked a few times, twisted his towel in his hands, and stared back at each of them.

"I suggest after school. Today." He turned his full attention to the youngest of the three and smiled. "On the track. We'll work on your cardio."

The smiles, whispering, and eye contact stopped as soon as the water from the shower heads did. Tuffnut finished his song by kicking the door open and jumping out, showing the whole locker room his bare skin. Snotlout came out with a towel around his waist, throwing another that hung off a bench at his only friend's face.

"Fuck man," He grumbled. "put something on."

Hiccup scrambled through his locker. He wasn't really looking for anything important; his shoes and clothes were already in his hands, his backpack on the floor by his feet. The only reason he kept his head in his locker was to keep that small flame of hope that Snotlout wouldn't notice him and would just keep dressing.

His eyes grew wide when he heard a pair of footsteps making their way toward him. Goggles, a towel, and his swimming cap fell on top of him, causing him to curse under his breath. As he reached down to

grab them all, a hand slowly came into his sight. A pale hand. His panic slowly wavered into nothing more than a memory as he watched the mess he had created be cleaned. Jack weaved his arm over Hiccup's shoulders, placing his hand on the fifteen year old's arm when he stood up.

He chuckled softly. "You're such a clutz, dragon boy."

Hiccup couldn't understand why his face felt extremely warm or why Jack's chuckle became a fully fledged laugh. But, it made his heart race and his shoulders stiffen, a feeling he never liked. '_Must be the heat from the showers_. _Yeah_, _the heat from the showers is getting to us_.'

With pressed lips, he looked up at his friend. "Shut up and get your stuff so we can leave." He whispered.

Jack shot him a smile and shook his head as he walked away, drying some of his hair with a towel. Hopefully, the rest of the day wouldn't be as embarrassing as swim class was. A bitter taste lingered on the back of his tongue as he remembered having to stay at the shallow end of the pool. The shouts and whistle blows of the teacher still rang in his ears, making him want to crawl into a dark hole. How embarrassing; not being able to swim. His movements became slow as he thought about everything that could happen; what if he was pushed into the far end of the pool and nobody was there to see? What if he tripped and fell off a bridge into the waters below? What ifâ€¦what if Hiccup was knocked out and thrown into the pool by Snotlout? What ifâ€¦

"Jack?" Fishlegs' voice caused him to jump and slam his head against the locker door.

"Fluck!" The teen screamed as he grabbed his head, throwing his backpack over his shoulder. "What is it?" His words came out as he hissed in pain, pulling his hand away a few times to see if he was bleeding.

Hiccup snickered at his attempt to swear. Fishlegs tried his hardest to suppress a laugh as well. "The bell rang a minute ago. We've been calling your name. Did you zone out or something?"

"Y-yeah."

The day continued with much more embarrassing events. Whenever a teacher searched the classroom for students to answer a question, they would always pick on Jack who was trying his best to snake down and hide under his desk. Girls passed him notes, asking him on dates and other such things. Of course, the note would always be snatched up and read aloud to the class while they laughed and pointed. It was not his day _at all_. He looked over at Hiccup during their last period and noticed how sorry he looked. The corners of his lips twitched as he forced a smile on his face. At least the day was almost over.

Finally, the bell rang and everyone jumped up. Jack released the breath he had been holding and walked out the door, smiling when he heard Hiccup stumbling along. The school's track wasn't very far away; behind the indoor pool and down a small hill. Inside the paved oval stood the soccer field where, coincidentally, the girl's soccer

team was training; running suicides and kicking soccer balls to one another. Fishlegs sat next to him on the bleachers that were laid out on the outside of the track.

He looked down at megaphone in the older teen's pale hands and raised an eyebrow. "Where did you get that?"

"Do you want to know?" Jack raised an eyebrow back, smiling slyly. "Do you really?"

Fishlegs shook his head and looked over the soccer field. "You're going to embarrass him in front of them. You know this, right?"

"I do know this."

"It doesn't sound like you care if he gets embarrassed."

"You're right. I don't care if he does. Besides, how was I supposed to know _they _would be here?"

Hiccup shivered slightly as he plopped his bag on the lower bleacher benches. His gym clothes were thin and short sleeved, making the air around him feel cooler than it actually was. September and he had a love-hate relationship and this was preciously why. It was a fifty-fifty chance that the days would either be blissfully warm or burning cold.

"Hic!" Jack said happily, using the mysterious megaphone. "Five laps!"

The brunet jumped at the loud noise and looked up at it's owner. "Five laps!? But wh-"

"Don't ask questions!"

With a sigh, the boy shook his head and began to steadily jog around the track. The training lasted perhaps an hour. Maybe more. He didn't know, the sun was confusing him. But, within the time span, training consisted of more then just running. No, Jack had him doing all sorts of things. In the middle of laps, he would scream out of the megaphone for him to do ten jumping jacks or seven push ups.

In the middle of the horrendous activity, Fishlegs' mother arrived with snacks she usually provided her son with when he came home. She sat and watched, cheered for the poor dear, gave them each a few more cookies, and left in the span of maybe twenty minutes.

"Hiccup!" Jack screamed through the megaphone.

The sudden noise caused the teen to trip over, his face skidding across the "possibly fake" tar.

"Oh my god, is he okay?" The blonde asked, crumbs falling out of his mouth as he ate his second of four cookies.

"Maybe." The other said normally before putting the megaphone back up to his lips. "You alright?"

His voice was muffled slightly but was loud and clear enough for them to hear. "I _hate_ you!"

"Yeah, he's alright." Jack said, placing the voice enhancer down between his feet.

The sun slowly began to set as time passed. All the girls on the field had left as well as Fishlegs. Hiccup panted as he climbed up the bleachers to where his questionable friend sat, grabbing the bag that was handed out to him. He muttered his thanks and sat down, chugging down the small thing of SunnyD. Jack chuckled as he looked out over the empty space.

"Manâ€|" He whispered. "your face plant looked like it hurt."

"It _did _hurt. A lot." The other whispered back as he rubbed his sore cheek. "Surprised I still have all my teeth."

"Hmmâ€|"

Birds twittered in the trees around the field, filling in the silence between the boys. Jack had seen the sun set many times and had seen every sort of purple, pink, blue, and yellow it gave off. But, never before had he seen such a glorious orange. True, orange wasn't the nicest of colors. Wasn't even his favorite color. It was just something about how it perfectly lit up the colorful leaves on the ground, sparkled off of the metal goal posts, and brought out the natural red highlights in Hiccup's hair that made him suddenly fall in love with it. Each brown freckle on his face popped out, almost making his grass eyes stand out even more.

It was clear that the fifteen year old could feel the other staring because a light pink began showing under all the dots. "So, uh, Jack." He stuttered, looking down at his four cookies and two cupcakes. "Do you have a family?"

Jack looked away and weaved his hand through his hair. "I guess I have a family of sorts." He pulled his hand away and looked closely at the single strand of hair between his fingers. Ugh, his roots were showing. Great.

"What's your mother like?" The brunet nibbled on the smallest of the cookies, turning his attention to his wrist where the blue and white bracelet hung loosely. The years had begun to show; threads sticking out, all matted and un-kept.

Mother? When he thought of a mother, he thought of Tooth. The one woman who _truly _took care of him. "She's alright. She gets a little hyper sometimes, though." He smiled slightly at the thought of introducing him to her. He'd be so confused as to why he was so pale while she was so tan. "Myâ€|uh, mom is from Thailand."

"Thailand?" Hiccup asked, finally looking up at him. "That's pretty cool. Do you know any Thai?"

Poor Jack bit his lip slightly as he searched through his limited vocabulary. Every once in a while, Tooth would teach him a new word or phrase, but, she hadn't done it in a while. Looking into the other's eyes, his lips quivered and his accent lacked as he spoke.

"à,%à,±à,™à,,à,´à,"à,\$à^à,²à,%à,±à,™à,£à,±à,•à,,à,,à,"..."

Hiccup blinked as he looked up into those overly blue eyes. Whatever he said sounded sincere and it made the pink return to his cheeks. "W-what does that mean?"

Jack's eyes dropped and he looked away, forcing a smile onto his face. "It meansâ€|uhâ€|'are you going to finish that'." He pointed toward the two cupcakes. "I'm getting pretty hungry."

He stared at him a moment more before scuffing, giving him both. Hiccup was never into sweet things anyway and the cookies would send him into a sugar rush as it was. The two sat there while they silently ate, breaking off bits of their snacks to give to foxes and birds passing by. The wonderful orange went as quick as it came and soon left them in near darkness. Feeling something warm against his shoulder, Jack looked down and saw Hiccup; mouth open slightly, chest softly rising and falling.

Smiling, he put the rest of the treats in the paper bag, threw both packs around his arm, and started walking with the brunet on his back. His warm breath heated his neck and ear, making him chuckle at the tickling sensation.

By the time he reached the Haddock's household, it was well dark and most of the lights in the house were on. Jack quietly walked on the other side of the car in the driveway, pushing the gate open with his foot. When he looked in Hiccup's room, he was happy to see nobody in there. He began trying to push the window up with his forehead.

'_Damn_â€|' Jack thought after a minute of pushing. '_Locked_'

He sighed and counted his options. There were three ways in; the window, the back door, and the front door. The window was obviously out and walking in through the front door would cause problems. But, if he timed it correctly, the chances of him getting in the back door were better than none. As he turned to the door, something moved in the corner of his eye. The door to Hiccup's bedroom opened, the light shining from the hallway bounced off Toothless' silky fur.

"Toothless." He whispered against the window. "_Toooothlessss_."

The black lab's tail wagged as he walked over, jumping onto the desk. With his teeth, he skillfully unlocked and tried his hardest to help open the safest way into the house. Jack smiled and laid Hiccup out on his bed, patting the old puppy on his head. "Good boy." He muttered before climbing back out.

Strange really. Every other light, even most outdoor lights, shined a brilliant white. But that was not what he saw when he started walking down the eerily silent street. Instead, the lights shined an ugly yellow, flickering on and off. He stopped a few feet away from the house in thought. If Hiccup's father saw Jack climbing up to the tree house that would cause a fight or a complete arrest. He sighed and began walking again, a chill running up his spine.

"No files yet, Jack?"

His heart dropped. It splashed into his stomach and caused acid to

ruin his insides. He could practically feel the cold metal of a bullet entering his chest and head as he turned to only see piercing gold eyes.

"It's been a while now, Jackson." Pitch said clearly, smirking at the fear in the teen's contact eyes. "Have you not gotten close enough?"

Jack's bottom lip curled into his mouth as he thought things over. It had indeed been about two or three weeks. "Not yet. Just a little longer though and I'll have those files on all of us."

A small butterfly flew past the man's face, distracting him as he talked. "Little Frost, do you honestly think he'll love you back?"

"W-wha' are you talking about?"

"I'm talking about that little stunt that you pulled after training today." Pitch lifted his hand, allowing the butterfly to land on a single finger. "Nobody outside the Family will ever love you, Jackson. It would be better for everyone if you just do your job. I don't want you getting hurt."

Jack moved his gaze over to Hiccup's house. It was true to an extent. His real parents didn't love him. They didn't even care and try to go looking for him when he went missing. But something about the way Hiccup smiled and talked, the way he sheltered him and fed him made Jack wonder if maybe he did care. Of course, he kept this to himself and balled his hands up into fists.

"Understood."

* * *

><p>AN: And we're moving along. A huge thanks to AlexJohnD for helping again :) Dude, thank you for picking up all my mistakes.
- ADAM**

Reviews = Motivation = Chapters

13. Books

A/N: Whoa, oh gods, thirteen chapters. I hardly go up this high. This is like...big. Don't mind me, I'm starting to get sick and my head is all fuzzy. Without Alex, this chapter would have looked pretty...well, stupid. Seriously, I messed up. I get most, if not all, of my motivation from your reviews that I read at like...midnight. Or three in the morning. It depends when my body is ready to do stuff. Thank you, Alex. Without you, this chapter would have looked half-assed and would have been an insult to the French. And thank you, readers and reviewers. Without you, this fic wouldn't have made it past Chapter 10. On with the show.

* * *

><p>Hiccup sighed and scratched the side of his head with the eraser of his pencil. He had watched many people do stupid things with their friends. Most of those things involved a trampoline, a roof, and a

trip to the hospital. But not his friends. No, his friends wouldn't do something like that. His friends would stay quietly on the ground, trying to learn a new language. In his eyes, there was no need to learn French. The chances of him going to France were slim. So, why did he sit there, writing down simple words in both his native tongue and the foreign curiosity?

Fishlegs had called him late that night, asking him questions on the game he was currently borrowing. Hiccup tiredly gave him the answers, trying his best not to fall asleep while sitting up. The questions continued at an easy pace for Hiccup's sake and were pretty standard; where was this place, what is the answer to this riddle. But, his last question was just strange and fully woke up the brunet.

"So," Fishlegs asked over the phone. "what did you and Jack do after I left?"

"Umm...we talked. And ate." He nodded at each one, scratching his arm as he thought over the events. Mainly, he was just trying to remember when and how he got home. "He knows Thai."

The game music in the background stopped or at least was muted. "He knows Thai? There is no way he has ever been to Thailand. His paler than a sheet of paper!"

Hiccup shrugged. "Well, he knows it. His mother is from Thailand so she taught him. I had no idea what he said, but, it sounded cool."

"Everything and anything sounds better in a different language, my friend." Fishlegs shifted in his seat, his game controller hitting the floor. "And you know what we should do? Since you're going to see Astrid again "

"No."

"...you should try and impress her."

"No. I'm not learning another language just to impress someone."

Sadly, he didn't have a choice. Lunch time had come around faster than poor Hiccup had expected and, before he had a chance to make a run for it, Jack and Fishlegs grabbed him from the hallways, trotting him outside to the bleachers. There were many complaints and much squirming but, they had managed to pin him to his seat.

Jack had chosen the language, claiming that it was the best to use when impressing someone, saying it was the language of love. Plus it seemed incredibly easy for him. By the middle of lunch, he could say almost every greeting, simple words, the names of landmarks, and a few other things that he would never admit to knowing. Fishlegs hadn't been as lucky, only knowing one or two greetings as well as a swear here and there. But when it came to Hiccup, it seemed there was no hope for him.

"Chevaux?" The brunet asked, looking over at his blue contacted friend.

Looking over at the small notebook, Jack shook his head and pointed to the word with his pencil. "No. Cheveux. Not chevaux. Chevaux means horses."

He groaned and rolled his eyes, looking at the text book that sat on the other side of his lap. There were so many words; he couldn't tell what was what. Commas sat on their side and on top of letters, one too many letters for a word. It was all so much. He shook his head at the confusion and looked back and forth from his text book to his note book.

"Ummâ€|" He mumbled under his breath. "Je m'appelleâ€|la pomme de terre?" Yes, it sounded right. But Jack's laughter proved otherwise.

"Your name is potato?" The comment caused even Fishlegs to join in the laughing.

Hiccup watched the two bust their guts, allowing his cheeks to turn red in embarrassment. The white haired teen placed a hand on his youngest friend's shoulder, smiling as he shook his head. "You had it half right. It's just Je m'appelleâ€|Hiccup. That's it."

His eye twitched as he repeated after him, a small smile climbing onto his lips when the other nodded in approval. While he calmly looked over his notes, he pulled out his sandwich and finally began to eat. Fishlegs had already finished his meal and jumped off the bleachers, going to throw his trash away. His mother had made the three special bag lunches, each bag carrying a sandwich, a cookie, an apple, an orange, and a bottle of soda. Jack pulled out his treat and looked it over. He loved sugary things â€" chocolate and other such things â€" but his stomach churned too much for him to even think about eating it.

The seventeen year old grumbled and turned to the brunet. "Here, do you want my cookie?" He asked.

"Yeah, sure." Hiccup nodded.

It wasn't long before the bell rang and Fishlegs came running back as fast as he could to get his stuff. Pulling his backpack over his shoulder, Jack smiled at the youngest of them.

"So," He started, turning so he walked backwards, facing Hiccup. "how was that cookie? She makes the best, huh?"

He nodded and looked up at him, thinking over the many new words he had just learned. For a moment he bit his lip then smiled, speaking almost proudly. "Je t'aime."

The teen froze in place for a moment and just stared. His heart dropped into his stomach, making it churn even more. All the blood in his veins swam up to his cheeks and heated them. He brought his hand up to his face as he stared down at the confused boy and wondered if he knew what he had just said. Finally, his heart began to beat once more, bursting into small butterflies.

"Do you know what you just said?" Jack asked, clearing his throat as his hand dropped to his side.

Hiccup raised an eyebrow. "I said 'I liked it'â€|right?"

He was completely far off but it made the white haired boy smile. There was no chance that he would ever say it knowingly, in English or not. So, he nodded and stuffed his hands into his pockets. "Yeah. Yeah, you did. Oh!"

Kicking off his shoes, he tied them together, throwing them over Hiccup's shoulder as he started walking off. "I have some business to take care of! And make sure you do your training while I'm gone! I'll pick you up when it gets dark!"

Snotlout, who stood by the door leading inside the school, snorted at the comment. Tuffnut and Ruffnut looked over at their leader with raised brows.

"Pick him up?" Ruffnut asked.

"Sounds like their dating. Gross!" Her brother's eye twitched.

The pig faced teen nodded, a disgusting and twisted smile rubbed across his face. "And it seems the protective boyfriend won't be back till dark."

* * *

><p>It seemed as if they should be underground, coming up through the living room floor. It did not seem right to be walking out in the open even if there were hedges blocking the neighbor's view.<p>

The grass stuck to his bare feet as he walked, rain sprinkling down like a cold shower. He shifted slightly inside of his new sweatshirt. It was the same color, same brand, same everything but, it was new. The sleeves were clean, un-torn, and clung to his wrists without hesitation. He groaned slightly and looked around, his hand on the doorknob.

Aster placed his hand over Jack's, nodding slightly as a car passed by. It was a small surprise that the door opened without an alarm going off; especially since the house was so expensive looking.

"They left it open for the cleanin' crew." The older of the two explained, closing the door behind them. "Called the cleanin' crew an' told 'em there was no need to come over."

A crystal chandelier hung in the foyer, lighting the area in small rainbows and white light. The cool, marble floors felt strange against his feet and caused the grass to shed off his skin. "How much time do we have?" Jack asked, picking up a small vase with leather gloved hands.

Aster smirked and held a sterling silver letter opener up to the light. "Two hours before they come back, more or less. Went ta see a movie."

He nodded and began shoving small, valuable items into his backpack. The inside of the house was rather large; two staircases leading up to the second floor, a dining room, a parlor, a living room, two bathrooms _just_ on the first floor. It was bigger than the abandoned

ice cream factory he lived in with Pitch and some of the others.

The bedroom was incredible. A queen sized bed sat perfectly in the middle of the room, a dresser on either side of it. One held a jewelry box while the other carried a laptop. Before searching for small, worn rings, Jack laid down on the puffed up mattress and sighed. A skylight gave the perfect view of the rain above him. Aster frowned as he came into the room and sighed, shaking his head.

"Jack, what're you doin'?" He asked, leaning against the doorway.

For a moment, he ignored the Australian, closing his eyes and letting out a sigh. "It's a real bed, Bunny. Not a hammock, not a sleeping bag." He turned onto his side and pulled a pillow close to his face. It smelled clean, like cucumbers and melons. "A real, genuine bed."

There were times "Aster didn't like to admit" he forgot Jack's situation. He forgot that the teen usually went to bed on a stack of clothes or on a cold, stone floor. When they were first introduced, he saw Jack's 'bedroom'. There were a few drawings on old newspapers scattered across the floor, a pair of shoes that contained holes, stains, and other such things, and a stack of paper, boxes, and clothes in the corner. Aster regretfully asked what it was to which Jack replied happily, "It's my bed!" Every once in a blue moon, he would bite his lip and take the poor boy out for ice cream, dinner, a movie, and back to his own house. The look on the child's face broke his heart. A kid shouldn't have been that happy to see a real bed with a real mattress and a real blanket.

This sight just brought back hated and loved memories of their relationship. His gaze slowly went to the ground as he trotted over to the jewelry box. "I know it's a real bed. Now, get up 'fore your hair gets all over it."

"But it's so big and comfy!" Jack groaned. There was much tossing and turning before he was satisfied, got up, and straightened the covers.

He looked out the windows as he started walking down the hall. A large pool sat in the ground of their backyard, all covered up for the season. There had only been one time he remembered being in a pool. It was long ago when he was no more than four, before his parents became unnecessarily angry at each other and the only drink he had ever heard of was sprite. The pool was in the shape of Mickey Mouse's head and, if his memory was right, gave him the greatest joy during the summer. No watermelon or amount of ice cream could compare to that red, plastic pool.

He grumbled and continued into another room, looking around for valuables. A jewelry box, a vase, anything really. Then it caught his eye. The crib in front of a wall of curtained windows. The room was a nursery. And not one for an expected child, no, he could smell used diapers in the trash can.

Jack picked up a small snowman doll, taking his mask off slightly so it hung by his ear. He didn't know what it was about the room or about this meaningless toy but he felt almost sad. Depressed.

Scared, even. But, all he could do was put the toy back where it was before and hope that the parents knew what a special gift they carried.

By the end of the first hour, they had already half way filled their bags. Aster shook his head as he closed his in the living room. "Alright. That's enough for today. Anymore an' they'll know."

The teen nodded and flung his backpack over his shoulder. "Alright." The jewels and silver rattled against the canvas of his bag, making him wince when it hit his back.

The two walked back in eerie silence, hoping that the rattling would be concealed by the traffic. Their masks were already off, Jack's in his pocket, Aster's in his bag. It was weird putting them on after not having them for a while and it was weird taking them off after having them on. Jack found himself constantly putting his hand up to his face to block the cold breezes.

Sitting on the ground next to the entrance was a small girl. Anyone who didn't know any better would say she was no more than ten or eleven. But, the members of the 'Family' knew better.

The twenty year old stood up, barely reaching Jack's shoulder. She was covered in black and had a harsh look in her eyes. While Red Death stood as Pitch's muscles and hands, Onyx stood as his ears and eyes. She looked the two over with careful movement.

"Here." Aster grumbled, placing his bag in her hands.

The seventeen year old rolled his eyes, pulling a few books out of his bag before giving it to her as well. "I'm sure he'll be happy with this."

Onyx's gaze was piercing yellow and it was almost haunting. She stared up at his contacted blue eyes, her face more blank than the last few sheets of paper in a book. It made him shift in his spot and ball his hands into fists. She wanted more than what he gave her and he knew just what she wanted.

"I need three more days." He whispered. "Three more days and I'll have everything he wants."

She stared at him for a moment more before going inside, hardly making a sound. That girl was the source of everyone's nightmares.

Both boys sighed and parted ways, Aster going home while Jack walked back up to the school. He tossed the books in the nearest bush and looked down over the track. His heart sped up as he saw that the only person running on the track was a blonde girl, the music from her headphones blasting. Did Hiccup already make his way home? Or was he lying in a ditch somewhere, dying and bleeding from his side?

'_He had my sweatshirt on this morning_.' He thought to himself. '_He_'s safe as long as he has that on. _Right? _Yes_. _He has to be_.'

Jack looked up as he started walking again, the rain pouring harder, soaking him to the bone. He started thinking of all the places Hiccup

could be; home, at the park, at Fishlegs'. The honk of a car horn brought him from his thoughts. Speak of the devil.

"Jack!" Fishlegs called from the rolled down window. "What are you doing?"

"I was about to ask you the same thing." He looked in and waved at his friend's mother. "Hello."

She waved back with a forced smile. "Hello, dear. You haven't seen Hiccup around, have you?"

"No, I came up here to get him." His heart beats became audible in his ears and he was afraid the others could hear it as well. "Is he missing?"

The large teen nodded. "His dad called us. I haven't seen him since school ended. Where do you think he could be?"

Jack could feel a lump form in his throat, his shoulders shrugging by themselves. "I don't know"

* * *

><p>AN: I love a good game of hide-and-seek. Also, I took a look at the Rise of the Guardians script and, come to find out, the first Nightmare Pitch makes in the movie is named Onyx. - ADAM**

Reviews = Motivation = Chapters

14. Graves

A/N: Sorry this chapter is so short. It was going to be longer, but, I split it into two chapters(it was around fifteen pages on my word document). Please don't hate me for the shortness of this chapter.

* * *

><p>"Hiccup!"<p>

There was not a single thing on Earth that could be louder than Jack's voice at that moment. He ran around the town, frantically screaming the brunet's name. This was bad. Very, very bad.

'_What if someone saw my sweatshirt and beat him for knowing me?_' He thought to himself. It only made the numb feeling in his chest worse.

"Hiccup, answer me!" He screamed, running down a street.

At this point, he was pushing himself down each road, ignoring horns and insults that were thrown at him by drivers. The cold rain made him shake as he ran down his friend's driveway, looking in through each window. Not a single light was on. He knocked on the window of Hiccup's room. No answer. Toothless didn't even bark at the sound.

Jack bit his lip as he thought of where he could be, his foot tapping impatiently. Sadly, all he could think of was how people would beat him, torture him if they had him in their grasps. He shook his head and climbed up the tree house not that far away.

"Hiccup?" The teen whispered.

A raccoon that had made its way up there earlier that day lifted its head and stared at the intruder with slightly glowing eyes. With a hiss, it ran out one of the glassless windows and scurried up the tree. Jack sighed, climbing down the ladder as fast as he could. Slipping and falling half way down, he quickly ran out to the streets again, calling out the fifteen year old's name as loud as he could. His heart thumped in his ears and his blood rushed from his toes to his chest, making his feet numb. He could practically hear Hiccup telling him off, saying that he should have kept his shoes, that he should be wearing them. Lips curling into a slight smile, a car came driving down the corner. His blood turned cold and he stopped as he stared into the head lights like a lost deer. The car stopped just inches from his nose.

"Jackson!" A woman shrieked from inside the car, using his name like a swear. She unrolled the window and poked her head out. "Jackson, what are you doing?!"

Jack sighed in relief. "Tooth, I need you're help!" He ran to the window. "Hiccup's missing and I-"

"Hiccup? Is that the boy whose father has the files on us?"

"Yes, he is. He's missing and I need you to help me find him." He tried hard to hide how desperate he actually was, but, he could tell by the look on Tooth's face it wasn't working as well as he hoped.

She nodded and unlocked the doors. "Alright, hop in."

Jack did as he was told, jumping into the passenger's seat. There have been a few times he had been in a taxi or on a bus "mainly with Aster" but never had he been in Tooth's own car. It smelt like mint with a hint of bubble gum toothpaste; files stacked up in the back seat along with jars of pulled, cleaned teeth. A hummingbird wind chime hung from the rear view mirror, calming him down a few notches.

He leaned back into the seat, letting his hood cover over his head and past his eyes. For a moment, his heart slowed into a steady, healthy beat. Everything was alright. Until he heard it. Just a small voice in the back of his head, taking on the tone of Hiccup. It tugged at him and caused him to flip his hood off in time to see a bolt of lightning a few miles away.

The thunder crashed against him as if he was a drum, making him jump slightly at the familiar noise. What if that bolt just hit Hiccup? He could be lying there; charred and broken.

"Jack, are you alright?" Tooth asked, looking over at him.

He shook his head, looking through every window. "We need to find him. H-he could be dead or he could have been hit by a car or shot or

ra-

A hand on his knee forced him to stop. It was a small, gentle gesture; the kind a mother uses to calm a startled child. He looked over at her with scared eyes, hoping that she had words to back this up.

"We'll find him." She said firmly. "Just calm down and think. Where could he have gone?"

Yes. Yes, he needed to stay calm. Freaking out wasn't going to help anything. It might even make it worse. He bit his lip and thought. Thought way back before high school, before any of this ever happened. Back when they were nothing but two foolish children sharing a simple act of caring for each other.

Back then, whenever Hiccup was sad or angry, he would run. Mostly around the block, but sometimes, he would run all the way to their field and scream into the grass. Other times, he would just sit on the swings at the park and wait for Jack to come get him, his legs kicking in the air. If things had gotten really bad, he would have never turned to the other. He would have turned to

"The cemetery." He muttered. Looking up at Tooth, he nodded. "He's at the cemetery."

She glanced at him and raised an eyebrow. The cemetery? "Are you sure?"

"Not really." Jack shrugged, watching as she took a left and sped down the empty road. "But, it's the only other place I haven't really looked."

The rain looked like bugs against the headlights and the wind chime began to sooth him a bit more. At the moment, all he could think about was the worst possible situation. All he could see in his mind was Hiccup laying there in the grass, his eyes glazed over from lack of soul. He could feel the strings of his heart being plucked in an unwanted tune and it made him pull at his sweatshirt.

Even though it didn't take long to turn down a few blocks and ride up the dirt road, it felt like hours to him. As soon as the town's cemetery gate came into view, Jack jumped out and ran as fast as he could through the mud, ignoring Tooth's yells from the car.

The cemetery was larger than most for a small town. Some of the tombstones looked blank, their words washed away from centuries of rain and snow. Most of them looked brand new; polished marble, finely chiseled words and symbols. If only they were all lined up and put in alphabetical order. He ran up to the top of the small hill, over looking every stone, flower, and bench that was around. Off in the distance, toward a bushel of trees, was a dark figure. It was small, shaking, and hunched over what Jack could only guess was a grave. The only thing moving his legs forward was pure hope. He ran down the hill, slipping a few times on the mud as another lightning bolt struck the Earth a few miles away. The thunder rattled the ground, almost throwing him off balance.

When he finally came to the poor figure, he dropped to his knees and crawled over. Hiccup's backpack laid leaning against his leg, the

tags and buttons shaking against each other as he looked over. He looked like an absolute mess. A split lip, a bruised cheek, an eye that had started turning black and blue. But all Jack could really do was hug the brunet and smile. Hiccup was alive. He might be in pain, he might be hurt, but he was alive.

The fifteen year old blinked for a moment and hugged him back lightly, moving himself slightly so the older teen wasn't crushing his ribs. "Jackâ€¦" He whispered, his voice hoarse and choppy. "what are you doing here?"

"I was looking for you." Jack flicked him upside the head. "You scared the daylight out of me, you know that?"

Hiccup chuckled lightly. "Sorryâ€¦I didn't mean toâ€¦I justâ€¦" He coughed, rubbing his throat as he pulled away.

"This is something I would do. You would never do something like this." Jack stood up, picking up the other's bag as he did. "Now come on. I'm gonna take you home."

He shook his head as he stood up with him. "I'm umâ€¦I'm not ready to go home yet. M-my dad will be, uhâ€¦be pretty mad with me for running out like that."

"Then I'll take you to my friend's house and you can spend the night there. But you'll have to call your dad just so he doesn't arrest us for kidnapping you."

For some reason, this made him laugh. True, it did hurt his side and he did mumble in pain, but, he still smiled slightly on his way to the car. Tooth looked at the teen through the mirror as he climbed into the back seat, drenched to the bone. She smiled, introduced herself politely, handed him her cell phone, and started driving home.

Hiccup bit his lip as he pressed the number in and placed the phone up to his ear. It rang slowly, making his blood turn cold.

"Hello?"

"Dad?"

"Hiccup?! Where have you been?! Where are you?!"

"I've beenâ€¦I've been visiting mom."

There was silence on the other end. This was going to be hard to do.

"Umâ€¦I had a rough time at school. And I, uhâ€¦I'm staying at a friend's house tonight. Soâ€¦yeah."

"You should have called me earlier. I could have come get you."

—

"I-I-I know, dad. But, I just needed some time alone. You know?"

"Well, alright." Hiccup could still hear the anger in his voice as he talked. "Be home tomorrow. I'll call the school, tell them you're sick." _

"Thanks, dad. Goodnight." He hung up the phone and handed it to Tooth, mumbling a 'thank you' before leaning back in the seat, being careful of the teeth and files.

The ride to her house was longer than expected. Jack thought that they would be there in less than a half an hour. But, no. She had groceries to pick up and medication to drop off. Their last stop of the night was putting gas in the car. Tooth looked at both boys, asking if they wanted anything. Hiccup had shaken his head, closing his eyes as he curled up against the leather. Jack nodded and asked if he could have a bottle of soda. She smiled, closed the door, and walked inside the station.

There was silence for the longest time and the oldest scuffed at it. How they always managed to end up in silence was beyond him and would forever be a mystery. He leaned back and looked up at the neon sign that shined much too brightly, showing that gas prices were going higher. There was no way he was ever getting a car. A bike, yes, a car, maybe not.

With a sigh, he looked through the rear view mirror, watching the brunet as he fell asleep against the clutter. His arms were against his chest, hands balled into fists under his chin. Water dripped off his hair, framing his face before it fell off the edge of his chin and onto the seat. His legs were curled up with him, his pants covered with mud and soaked with rain. Jack's eyes continued down to Hiccup's feet. Mud, grass, and a few bugs covered his shoes, making him look down at his own bare feet. They weren't as bad; dirt under and around the nails, a cut here and there that he really couldn't feel. It made him sigh. Maybe he should listen more to Hiccup and wear shoes more often. Even if they did weigh him down and caused him to trip.

Jack grabbed Hiccup's bag and opened it, rummaging through to look for the pair of shoes he was borrowing. As soon as a shoelace was in sight, he pulled out the foot ware with slight dread. But, when he saw the shoe, the dread was replaced with confusion. These were Hiccup's green converse, his _favorite_ shoes. The ones he wore_ all the time_. He raised an eyebrow at it and turned to look at his friend's feet again.

White sneakers. The very same sneakers that he let the seventeen year old borrow. Jack stared at them and thought for a moment. Hiccup never changed shoes unless he was going to a formal event. He untied the grime covered shoes and pulled them off, tying them onto his own feet.

Tooth arrived a minute later. She handed Jack his soda, pumped gas into the car, and began driving again within the span of five minutes. But to him, it seemed much less. He looked out the window and twisted the cap on and off, trying to figure out just why Hiccup walked around in his shoes.

* * *

><p>AN: Wow, fourteen chapters. This is new for me. The

highest I've gone is about thirteen or twelve. Thank you guys for supporting me! All of you! - ADAM**

Reviews = Motivation = Chapters

15. Hips

A/N: Alright, I need to explain. First and foremost, please don't be mad at me. We just recently lost our internet(due to overly high bills and my father not having any of the company's bull) and so, I haven't been able to motivate myself or post any chapters. But, I will be going to my local library to use their internet. Like I am right now. Secondly, OH MY GODS YOU GUYS. ONE HUNDRED REVIEWS. THERE WILL BE A SEQUEL, ANOTHER PHOBIA FIC AFTER THIS. I DON'T THINK YOU UNDERSTAND MY LEVEL OF HAPPINESS RIGHT NOW. Anyway, there are warnings. Of Roman hands and Russian fingers. If you've never seen Rose Red, I suggest you see it now otherwise, you won't understand the meaning. But yes, there is touching. This fic is rated M, you know. Enjoy I hope.

* * *

><p>They always fought like this; shouting back and forth. Every once in a while, a plate or a glass would fall to the floor and shatter. Sometimes, he would hear things being thrown around. It all depended on how angry they were and what they were doing. If his mother was doing the dishes and his father came in, sluggish with a bottle in his hand, they would have to get new plates the next day. They always fought like this, so, why did it bother him so much? Why did he hate every word that spat out of their mouths, hate the funny smelling bottles his father drank so much? Maybe it was becauseâ€|it wasn't always _like this._

_He can remember days where his father lifted him up into the air and spun him around, his mother biting her lip as she watched, worried that her husband might drop their child. The weekly trips to the beach during the summer and the weekly temper tantrums when he couldn't bring home the new crab friend he had made that day. Races to see who could finish their ice cream first. Races, that, he always won with a grin and chocolate smeared all over his face. _

Things were different nowâ€|and he wasn't sure why.

_Jack hugged his knees to his chest as he leaned against the door, listening to the shouts, the glass breaking. He wasn't paying much attention to what they were saying, just how they were saying it. The only thing he was trying to pay attention to was the stuffed rabbit sitting on his small bed. It was his very first Easter gift ever and, up until a month or two ago, it was his best friend. He smiled at the rabbit, ignoring the noise from the living room. _

It was small in some ways and large in others. It's ears flopped over it's face, the whiskers all gone from years of playing with it. The nose was made with pink thread, hardly touched by time; not a single fray to be seen. He had tried to take care of it as much as he could. But, being only seven, it was normal for him to throw the toy around the room.

_CL-ASH! _

The child jumped as he felt a dish shatter against his bedroom door. His smile fell and his fingers became slippery. He wanted to go out into the other room, tell them to stop fighting, tell them he hated them for doing this but, he sat still, actually listening to what they were saying.

_"I have just about had it with you!" His father shouted. "I know for a fact that you cheated! Don't tell me otherwise!" _

"I never cheated!" His mother tried to explain. "You, on the other hand, have been! I've seen you bar jump with girls hanging off your shoulders, rubbing up against you like whores while I stay at home and take care of our son!"

_"_Your _son! That there is _your_ son! And I think I deserve a little time by myself seeing as how I'm the only one working!" _

_"I would work too if I wasn't a full time mom and if it didn't have to clean up all your shit!" _

Something, he couldn't tell what, hit the wall not too far from his door. Perhaps it was the coffee table. "If you don't like it, just leave!"

_"Fine! And I'm taking Jackson with me! Since he is _my _son!" _

_He couldn't believe what he was hearing. Him and his mother were leaving? Were they moving out of town? No. No, they couldn't move out of town. This wasn't fair. They couldn't just stop yelling and along?
_

_Jack crawled out of his window, tears wielding up as he did so. He didn't care about the cold sting the snow gave his bare feet, nor did he care about the fact that everyone could hear him sobbing. He just wanted to run. Run, grab Hiccup, and run some more. He didn't care where, just as long as he was with his best friend in the whole world. _

_The brunet's window was always open, he knew this. He had carried him home and laid him in bed enough times that it would be common sense to keep it open. Without knocking, without even peeking in to see if he was actually inside, Jack opened the window, sniffing as he tried to keep his tears back. It clearly didn't work. Even though he couldn't see the other's face, he could hear it by the tone in his voice that he saw the tears. _

_"Jack?" Hiccup stripped off the heavy winter coat and took his freezing cold hand. "What's wrong? What happened?" _

He couldn't hold it anymore. The pain in his chest was just too painful. Through quiet sobs, Jack whispered. "Can I stay here tonight?"

* * *

><p>"Jack? Jackson?"<p>

The hand on his knee woke him up softly and carefully. He looked up at Tooth from where he sat, curled up against the window. The rain

and thunder had stopped as well as the car. She smiled at him and patted his knee once more.

"Come on," She whispered. "we're here. Can you come help me carry your friend into the house?"

He nodded. "I'll carry him by myself, Tooth. It's alright."

"B-but Jack â€"

"Really. It's alright." The teen chuckled lightly. "He hardly weighs anything. And you've got files and teeth in there, anyway. You carry those, I carry him."

Tooth opened her mouth, trying to think of a good argument. But, before she could object to anything, Jack was already holding Hiccup, carrying him into the house with ease. She sighed and gathered the things she needed for that night and the next morning, bringing them inside.

Artifacts from all over Asia decorated the inside of her house. Most were small, of course; bought at some gift shop while she visited her native country. But others were rather large, passed down through her family for generations. They made her sad when she saw them. Sometimes, she would remember happy memories with her parents and little sister. Mostly, though, they were like a reminder that they were gone. That she could never go back to that.

Jack laid Hiccup down on the couch and covered him with the blanket that was folded neatly on the top cushions. He smiled and sat down, pushing a lock of hair out of his friend's face. '_Gave me a heart attack_â€|' The younger teen seemed to lean into the touch, making the other smile.

"You know, he's going to get a cold like that." Tooth whispered and trotted down the hall. "Sleeping in those wet clothes."

He listened and waited as she opened a closet, pushing jars, papers, and bags out of the way. When she came back, she held a department store bag in her hand, clearly full of what he could only guess was clothes.

She smiled and sat it by his side. "I had gotten them for you butâ€|you wouldn't mind him borrowing them, would you?"

Jack smiled and shook his head, picking up a light blue t-shirt from the bag. "I don't mind, Tooth. Thank you."

Before he could say anymore, she walked into the bathroom. "Just tell me when you're done!" She called out. He nodded even though he knew she couldn't see him and carefully took the blanket off, setting it to the side. Man, was he a sight.

Everything seemed to stick to him; mud, clothes, hair. He looked like an absolute mess. But, nothing a wet cloth and towel couldn't fix. With a sigh, he stood up and made his way to the bathroom. Tooth was too busy preoccupying herself with the soaps carved into ducks and shells to see him wetting a facecloth with warm water, a dry towel in hand. He walked back into the living room and laid both on the arm of a chair, silently peeling the clothes off Hiccup.

Hiccup almost always wore long sleeved shirts and stayed as far away from shorts as possible. Unless he had to change for gym. Then, and only then would he wear short sleeves and shorts. And whenever he ran or did push ups, Jack was much too far away for him to see the other's bare limbs. Seeing them now made him smile. Freckles. Freckles everywhere. They covered almost every inch of his arms and seemed to thin out around his torso. His legs were soft and hairless. Jack couldn't tell if it was from shaving or if he was just naturally like that. Under his fingers, he felt fragile. He felt that if he moved in the wrong direction, if he pressed too hard on his skin, he might break a bone.

His fingers lingered above the waistline of Hiccup's boxers, his eyes focusing on his face. Thankfully, he was still fast asleep. Slowly letting out a breath, he began pulling down the thin fabric, trying to keep his hands steady. He allowed his eyes to travel lower; down his lightly rising and falling chest, over his belly button, and right to his hips. The boxers were halfway down, hardly showing anything. But, it still made him blush and tremble. His thumbs found their way to the little dents in Hiccup's hips. They were the only part of him that didn't seem frail. He pressed his thumbs in lightly, stroking the dents with slight care. Only when the brunet made a noise did he pull his hands away, throwing them behind his head.

In his sleep, the teen turned his back to him, his hands up to his chest. Jack sighed silently in relief and continued pulling the boxers off, replacing them with brand new ones. After washing the mud and dirt, he tried his hardest to put the rest of the pajamas on him. Every time he sat Hiccup up to put something on, he seemed to wince in pain. There were times when he was trying to put socks on him that he almost woke up. He would flail and almost fall on his back, taking note that he was very sensitive around the feet.

Putting the dirty, wet clothes in the bag, Jack knocked on the bathroom door. "Okay, Tooth. He's all washed, dry, and changed."

Tooth sighed from the other side of the door and walked out, smiling at him. "Thank you. Washer and drier are downstairs. Would you mind starting them up? I'll make us some hot chocolate."

She always offered him hot chocolate whenever he was over or sick. It was one of the many things he liked. Possibly the greatest thing he liked. With the biggest grin in the world, Jack ran downstairs, threw the bag in the washer, poured a bit of detergent in, and slammed the door closed, turning the dial as much as it could go. When he got back upstairs, Tooth hardly had the water heated, let alone boiled. So, he sat down on the floor and watched television. Cartoons to be exact; with the volume low so not to wake his friend.

She had to try her hardest not to burst out laughing. In a few months, he would be old enough to vote for the president and here he was, singing the theme song of a cartoon show softly. It truly made her wonder how much of a real childhood he got. If he did this after coming home from school, dancing around like she had whenever the theme song came on.

Tooth turned the stovetop down a notch, allowing Jack to watch his show. When it was over, she poured the water into the coco filled

mugs and stirred with mint candy canes. North always brought them over, always having to have one when he visited. He said it reminded him of her since he used mint toothpaste at home.

Jack smiled and pulled the candy cane out of his mug, sucking on one end as he sat at the table with her. "Thanks again. For helping me find him and letting us stay here for the night."

"Oh, it's no problem at all, Jack." She smiled, taking a careful sip from her own mug. "I don't mind having company. Get's lonely here sometimes, you know?"

"Mmhmm. I know the feeling."

Tooth watched as he stirred his drink again, glancing over at Hiccup every few minutes or seconds, depending on if there was a noise or not. "Jack, you know you can always talk to me, right?"

"Yeahâ€|yeah, I know."

There was something off in his voice, like he couldn't really trust her. It chilled her stomach which made her take a big sip of coco. The clock seemed to echo as time passed, their mugs becoming empty.

"Jackâ€|" She finally whispered, trying not to jump him. It clearly didn't work. "I'm not going to run and tell Pitch anything if you say something to me. If you tell me something, it'll stay with me. Same with Aster. We're not the others and we're defiantly not Onyx. We're on your side."

Jack shifted in his seat, staring down at the small puddle of coco that became cold in his mug. "Toothâ€|"

"Yes?" She seemed to lean on the edge of her seat, not wanting to miss any word he might say.

He stayed like this for a while, just staring at his reflection, almost having a sort of battle with his other self. Taking a deep breath, he finally glanced at her. "Tooth, Iâ€|" He sighed. "I think I love him."

"Who? Pitch?"

"What?! No!"

"Then who?"

The teen slowly turned and stared at Hiccup. Staring at his parted lips, watching his chest rise and fall with his easy breathing. Tooth watched intently and smiled. Everything made sense now; volunteering to get close to him, being late on bringing the files in. It was to protect him.

"I seeâ€|And if Pitch knows, he'll hurt him." Jack looked up at her as she talked, his face twisted with sadness.

"Don't you worry, sweetie." She said and placed a hand on his. "You're secret is safe with me."

* * *

><p>AN: Because you know Jack would be all over hot chocolate and cartoons like ants to sugar. Also, white hot chocolate mixed with mint chocolate candy canes is amazing. Can't wait for winter. Actually, I think I can. It's cold in this library. So, yeah, not as sexy as I wanted it to be, but, bahhh. You try writing sexy things in a library. And now, a message to AlexJohnD - I'm sorry I didn't send it to you first, but I wanted to see you're reaction. And thanks. For you know, the thing on your fic. The ad. Yeah. Thanks. And the such.
- ADAM**

Reviews = Motivation = Chapters

**P.S. Go read When Worlds Collide by The fabulous person I mentioned above. Because reasons and it's good. Now go my pretties! **

16. Snowflakes

A/N: Yeah, this chapter is short. Not much to say.

* * *

><p>He felt his face heat up as he listened to Jack talk about how he got into the house and how he managed to get into clean, new clothes. The mug in his hands wasn't nearly as warm as his cheeks and ears felt, making him look down as he shuffled his feet. "You, uhâ€|you undressed me?"<p>

The seventeen year old nodded. "Yeah. But I didn't see anything, I promise. I'm not a pervert or anything like that." He chuckled.

Hiccup tried to send him a smile back, but, the corner of his mouth barely even twitched. Just the thought of someone else seeing his naked skin made him shiver. And as he shivered, he felt the side of his head begin to throb. With a shaking hand, he brushed hair off his small scar, trying his hardest to calm the slight pain.

He shook his head after a moment. "Alright. Wellâ€|thank you. Can you, uhâ€|can you take me home? Please? I'm not feeling so well."

"Yeah, of course."

Jack stood up and helped the brunet onto his back. Last night, he didn't weigh that much and he was dripping wet. Now that he was drier than a desert, he truly was like a feather. He smiled slightly when the younger teen wrapped his arms around him, his head resting perfectly in the crook of his neck; almost as if they were puzzle pieces.

When he walked out and looked both ways, he tried to draw a map of the city in his head. A few blocks from Tooth's street was his old home and two blocks from there was Hiccup's. He began walking down the street, wondering if going left was the right way to go. It didn't matter much to him, really. He could hold Hiccup all day long and then some. But it'd be selfish of him to keep him in this

condition. Hell, Jack could feel his fever against his neck. It wasn't too high but it wasn't low enough to be considered normal.

The puddles that had frosted over during the night crunched and cracked under his steps. It made him chuckle lightly like a child. It made him remember those times when they were children. He would always jump on the frosted puddles, laughing and trying to get the other to join him. But Hiccup never jumped on and tried to crush the ice with him. Instead, he tried to pull the older boy off so that he wouldn't fall through and catch a cold. Now here Jack was, pulling him along so that he wouldn't get any sicker. The times have changed and he wondered if they were for the better or worse. Part of him, if not all, believed it was for the worse. Hiccup had no memories of him and everything began to feel one sided. Jack had always pictured them sitting together, telling stories of how stupid they were as children, holding hands and still sharing kisses. But, now, he wondered if any of that was a possibility or would forever remain fantasy.

He felt his hands grip tighter onto the smaller boy as he walked up the Haddock's driveway. His legs stopped when he saw the other's bedroom window. Slowly, his feet began to turn and his knees tried to bend as if he was ready to make a run for it. Ready to run with him all the way back to what he called home so that he could take care of him. It wasn't until the cold, October wind blew up his spin that he was taken back to reality. Hiccup wouldn't ever get better in that damp, stone room with him. He hardly ever got better when he was sick in that place. With a sigh, he opened the window and carefully crawled in, laying the teen on his bed.

As he pulled the covers up to Hiccup's chest, he saw a pair of evergreen eyes open and stare at him sleepily. "Jackâ€|? Did I fall asleep on your back again?"

Jack nodded and chuckled slightly. "Yeah, you did. That's alright, though. You're sick." He moved a few strands of hair out of the other's face as he smiled. "You get some rest now. I'll be over tomorrow because you still need to tell me how you got so banged up."

Hiccup sighed and looked out the window. "Alright." He muttered. Truthfully, he wanted to ignore the subject altogether for as long as he was alive. There was no telling what Jack would do if he found out what happened. "See you tomorrow."

The fifteen year old watched as his friend escaped out the window, closing it tightly as to not let in the cold. He stared out at the dying leaves for a moment or so before Toothless finally walked in, climbing in and curling himself up next to his master. Yawning, he petted the black lab and tried his best to fall asleep.

The clock began to play tricks with him. First it was around noon, possibly a few minutes after. Then it was around three o'clock. And now, it seemed to be six at night. He shook his head as he sat up, taking his alarm clock in hand. Did he really sleep almost all day? For a moment, he started cursing under his breath. That is, until he noticed that his head wasn't spinning and the need to roll over into a ditch was gone.

"Guess I really needed it." He whispered to Toothless who now sat happily at the foot of his bed.

The poor dog's tail began to wag uncontrollably as he watched his master lean over the edge of the bed and slip on his shoes. Whenever his human woke up and put his shoes on, it meant only one thing: he was going outside. When Hiccup turned around and smiled, he knew it was exactly that. Toothless jumped down, running as fast as he could toward the backdoor.

It took the boy a while to finally get to the backdoor. When he did, he coughed and allowed the over excited dog to run out and around the back yard. He flipped the porch light on, leaning against the wall as he looked up at the stars. There weren't that many stars out. Not as many as there were when he went up to camp during the summer. But, they were there and he enjoyed them nonetheless.

He closed his eyes and leaned his head back. Truthfully, the cold air felt good against his sweating forehead. Almost like a cold, wet, facecloth. It made him smile as he forced himself to think back to his mother. She had no face and her voice wasn't all there, altering during certain points, but he knew that it was her placing hot soup next to his bed. His mother mumbled something, making a tear fall down his face as he tried to place what the something was. 'I love you'? 'Get better soon' perhaps. His smile began to fall as he searched for more memories. Anything, really. Just something to help him think that there was a time before all this; before all the worries of colleges and jobs.

And there it was.

A single snowflake fell on his nose, making his entire body shiver. A bird chirped above him and made him open his eyes. It seemed familiar, almost as if he had seen the bird in a dream. He watched as it hopped on top of the porch light for a moment then fly off.

"_I like your dragon_." A small voice said off to the side.

Hiccup raised an eyebrow. "But I don't have a-" Turning around, he saw there was nobody there. Toothless was over by the tree, busy with other things. "â€|dragon."

The voice echoed in his head as he tried to place a face to it. It was clear, unlike the voices he usually heard when remembering people. He opened the backdoor and walked inside with his best friend; his eyes narrowed as he pictured a brown haired boy in his mind's eye. There was a slight laugh when he looked up at the window, watching snow slowly fall.

A single name tapped on the tip of his tongue and, with a horse whisper, he spoke it in question. "Jackâ€|?"

* * *

><p>He hated coming 'home' late. There was hardly anything scarier. The only thing scarier than the door shutting behind him and echoing off the bare, peeling paint walls was Onyx. Thankfully, she didn't seem to be in. There were no yellow eyes staring at him from the darkness that encased the room and it made him sigh in relief.<p>

The only place in the entire abandoned factory that he felt safe in was his room. And there was nothing special about his room, either. Other than the fact that it was his, of course. A few crudely drawn childhood pictures hung on a few walls, a pair of shoes in the corner, and his stack of newspapers, cardboard, and pillows for a bed was all he could picture right now. It wasn't much, but it was all he had.

He could feel the safety the room held just by staring at the door. Jack lifted his hand and touched the warm doorknob. Wait. Warm doorknob? But he hadn't touched it since yesterday.

With an angry expression, he opened the door and got ready for a fight. That is, until he saw Aster standing there, looking out the window. Part of him relaxed. The other part got ready to slap the Australian in the face.

"What are you doing here?" Jack asked and leaned against the doorframe.

Aster shrugged and looked at him. "Figured you'd wanna sleep in a real bed." He showed him his keys, walking out of the room. "Come on, Frostbite. I'm takin' ya home."

Jack stared at him for a moment. Why in the world was he being so nice? And why all of a sudden? With a shrug, he followed him outside and into the car he had gotten to know a lot better nowadays. When he had first turned fourteen, the man had offered to teach the teen to drive. It ended with him in the hospital, broken arm and all.

"So what's all this about?" He finally asked, looking out the window.

Aster glanced over at him before turning down an unfamiliar street. "Tooth told me about you an' that kid."

His entire being froze. Everything as numb. And in that second, he truly was Jack Frost. The boy looked up at him with pleading eyes. If he was going to drown him, kill him anyway, he wanted it to be done soon and quickly so he felt no pain. "She told you?"

He nodded. "Yup. She told me. An' only me."

Silence. Jack started internally swearing at the silence. Why was it always silent? Why couldn't there be a marching band outside so that he could pretend he didn't hear him? Jack hated the world. And he was pretty sure the world just hated him back, giving him silence instead of a band.

"So you're gay, are ya?" Aster pulled up to a fast food restaurant, finally getting a good look at his even paler face.

Slowly, he nodded and tried to hide his face. "Yeah. I like guys."

The man leaned back in his seat and stared at the steering wheel. After a moment, he tapped his fingers along it and sighed. "Well, what can you do?"

"You're not mad?"

Aster removed the keys and placed them in his pocket. "Why would I be mad? You two haven't had sex, right?"

Jack's face instantly went red. "N-no."

He laughed at the boy's reaction and ruffled his hair. "Good. Remember, Jack, marriage before sex. Marriage before sex."

* * *

><p>AN: I always imagined Bunny being this sort of person that is like, "Dude, I don't give two yokes" and then buys you a beer. - ADAM**

Reviews = Motivation = Chapters

17. Sessions

A/N: Gah! This is so weird. Bah! I'm uploading this from my grandparent's computer. I transferred it over. Hopefully, they never find it. That'd be embarrassing. Anyway, on with this crap you all seem to love.

* * *

><p>North smiled happily as he mixed a few drinks, handed people their meals, and joked around with a few others that sat up at the bar. It was early in the morning, nine o'clock to be exact; but that didn't stop his costumers from drinking a few mugs of beer. He looked around as he cleaned as glass and thought about what each person was going through.<p>

A man sat in the back, work shirt unbuttoned at the top and bottom, tie hanging loosely around his neck like a noose. His five o'clock shadow stood out and made the yellow mustard on his chin stand out even more. A few dirt stains rubbed his shoulders. Perhaps he was in some sort of chase or maybe he had been bar jumping all night long. It would explain the bags under his eyes.

Someone else grabbed his attention after a moment; a group of college students. All looked to be just above twenty-one, all rowdy, and all looking to get drunk right off. One of the boys carried a black eye and one of the girls had messy hair. He had a few things in mind that made him chuckle, but, he quickly erased them. Sometimes, it was better not to get into other's personal lives.

His smile grew into a grin when the door to the Blue Goose opened. Of course, it was normal for it to open, but the person who opened it turned his grin into an all out laugh of happiness. It wasn't everyday he saw his friend walk into the bar.

"Sandy!" He bellowed, making heads turn to the newcomer. "It has been long time old friend!"

Sandy smiled and climbed himself onto the bar stool, watching as North made his usual orange juice and hot wings. The thirty-five year

old was short with dirty blond hair that was neatly combed up into neat little spikes; a hair style he had had since he was a child. Sanderson, or Sandy as his friends preferred, was plump in a way. His stomach extended but it wasn't gross or misshaped. In fact, it looked like he had just a few extra suits on. His fingers weren't that plump at all. A little stubby, yes, but they moved swiftly like the fingers of a piano man. He straightened up his yellow tie and nodded a thank you when his odd breakfast was ready.

Sandy placed his suitcase and rather large file on the counter top, quickly nibbling on his mild wings. Which was a huge mistake on his part for, you see, North was like a child. A child on Christmas morning. Anything that caught his interest even the slightest made him itch with wonder. As he served his other customers, he couldn't help but look over at the file every chance he could. Even from across the room, he stared helplessly like a puppy dog.

Finally, the curiosity got the best of him and he opened the thick manila folder. Inside were many written papers, a few drawings, and the most recent picture of the child it was on. Freckled face, anxious green eyes, brown hair, red highlights. He frowned at the picture and read the name below it.

"Hamish Horrendous Haddock the third?" Sandy shook his head and flipped the picture over, revealing the name everyone used for the boy. "Hiccup? Why would they call him Hiccup?" North asked even though he knew his friend could not answer.

Nicholas and Sanderson had been friends since about the second grade when a group of kids began picking on Sandy for his weight. North quickly stepped in to save the boy and the two became instant friends. They were practically perfect for each other; North acted as the hands while Sandy acted as the brains. The two would help each other with school projects, comfort one another when the times got back, and laughed with each other when the times got great. Wherever one went, the other was soon to follow. So, when North told Sandy he was moving to America, Sandy was right next to him on the plane. Both quickly found jobs and moved in together in a very nice house. But, their time together in that house was short lived. After about half a year, Sandy became more detached from North. He hardly came home at decent hours and when he did, some of the time, he was covered in blood. Sandy didn't tell him where it came from. He would just smile and tell him he was out with some friends and they were just being stupid.

The real trouble came one night when North received a phone call from the hospital. Even though he was angry with his friend, he couldn't stay at home. He made a mad dash to the car and drove as fast as he could, almost running over a few people in the process. Somehow, Sandy had been stabbed in the throat. Nobody knew how. Not even Aster or Tooth who sat by his best friend's side.

North shook the memory from his mind and watched as Sandy did the same. With a shrug, he placed the file back on the counter and leaned against it, speaking in a whisper. "What is wrong with the Hiccup boy?"

Just as he tried to explain through pencil and paper, the watch on his wrist beeped. Time to start his morning appointments. North sighed and grabbed the rest of the hot wings, popping them into a

small take-out bag. "Take glass. Come back later."

Sandy smiled and nodded, taking his glass of juice(as well as his other things) and headed out the door. The smallish man jumped into his smallish car and drove to his office which wasn't that far.

When he pulled up, he watched as his first patient, Hiccup, walk in with a very peculiar friend. White hair, untied shoes, wrinkled and torn pantsâ€|and something that poked out of his pocket. A hospital mask? He shook his head and quickly walked out of the car, heading into his office with a bright smile and light feet. Sitting down at his desk, he smiled graciously at his patient and took a good look at his companion.

The other teen clearly wore contacts and his hair was dyed white, his brown roots showing. His shoes were on the wrong feet and his eyes continued to shift, as if he was searching for an exit to the room. Sandy knew this look. He knew the feeling of being trapped, the feeling of never truly being safe. And that mask he had seen earlierâ€|

"I'm sorry, Mr. Sanderson." Hiccup apologized. "This is Jack. He's my friend. I couldn't shake him off on my way here."

Jack nodded toward Sandy. "You the nut doctor?"

He nodded with a smile, pulling a pen and paper from his desk. It was a strange way of putting it and Hiccup did slap his shoulder, almost ordering him to apologize, but, Sandy understood. Teenagers will be teenagers.

"I'm sorry about him." He said, doing the work for his friend. "Pretty sure he was dropped on his head as a baby."

"I wasn't droppedâ€|" Jack crossed his arms. "My motherâ€|when she put me in my little swingâ€|would accidentally hit my head against the barâ€|."

Hiccup rolled his eyes. "I'm sure they were all accidents and not because she was sick of your stupidity." He smiled proudly at himself as his friend slid down his seat, keeping quiet.

"Anyway, nothing has really happened. Other than getting a new friend." He spoke to his therapist softly.

Sandy lightly touched a part of his own head in the same spot the teen would have his scar. Hiccup shook his head and lightly touched it. "Noâ€|no, no memory of that day still. Butâ€|I can see her a little more. I can't really see her face, but, I can see her hair and her clothes. I can sometimes hear her talk."

Jack relaxed as he listened, slowly sitting up. Was this all they did was talk? And why didn't the nut doc say anything back? It confused him greatly, but, he listened and watched his friend start to look about as confused as he felt.

The brunet's face twisted as he shook his head. "Andâ€|and there are other memories. Not of my mother or of my family. Butâ€|I think it's a boy. He comes in through my window."

The older teen readjusted himself as his eyes went wide. Hiccup continued. "I heard his voice loud in clear." He chuckled and looked up at Sandy. "It was almost as if the boy was right behind me."

Sandy stared at him and motioned him to continue. "He saidâ€|'I like your dragon'."

Jack stood up. The movement was so sudden and quick and unexpected, both of them stared up at him, waiting for him to say or do something important. But all he did was stare at his friend, mouth open and eyes wide. It was like he was in a state of shock. The weirdest state of shock any of them had ever seen. Slowly, his mouth closed and he sat down, pulling out his mask and twisting it in his fingers.

The three of them sat there in silence; Hiccup and Sandy staring at Jack, Jack staring at his mask.

Hiccup raised an eyebrow and continued talking to his doctor about smaller issues. About seeing Astrid again, about the party, about trying out for the football team even though sports weren't his favorite. And all the while, he would glance down at his friend to see if he was alright.

"Jack?" He said when there were ten minutes left on the clock. "Do you want to let some stuff out?"

The seventeen year old looked at him then up at Sandy. After a moment of awkward staring, he looked back down and stood up, slipping the mask into his pocket. "Nahh. What would talking about my problems do anyway? Besides, I shouldn't be complaining. After all, there is always someone out there who has it worse than I do." He smiled at Hiccup and pushed him playfully. "I know you have it worse than me."

The brunet rolled his eyes and chuckled. "Yeah, okay, I guess."

As they both began walking out, something grabbed hold of Jack's sleeve. At first, he thought it was Hiccup. That is, until he walked right past him and out into the hallway. With a raised eyebrow, he looked down at what tugged at his sweatshirt to see Sandy standing there, a card in his hand. He lifted his small arm up and looked at him with the most concerned face he had ever seen. And Jack was friends with Tooth, a woman who was concerned about his well being everyday. He took the card, nodded, and placed it in his pocket.

Sandy watched as the teens left the building, walking out into the not so harsh autumn cold. He sat at his desk, his head leaning against the window behind him. The two were now tiny dots on the sidewalk, but, he continued to watch. He knew his patient's friend was in pain. The same pain that haunted him a few years back.

* * *

><p>It was a rather long walk from Mr. Sanderson's building. The two had walked about seven blocks to the bottom of a hill, up and over the hill, and about four more blocks to get there. Now, even though it was a downhill trip, it seemed longer than the walk uphill.<p>

About half way back, Jack noticed something. "Hey, why aren't you wearing the sweatshirt I gave you?"

"Hm?" Hiccup looked up at him. "Well, it got dirty."

"_So_?!"

"So, it needed to be washed."

"You could have just whipped it off."

Hiccup looked at him angrily. "Well, that would have left a stain. That thing has so many stains on it that one more and it wouldn't have been presentable!"

"Good lord!" Jack exclaimed and threw his arms up over his head. "You're so stingy about clothes! Hell, you don't even fucking dress proper!"

"That's because I want to stay _hidden_ in the back of the classroom!"

"Why in the fucking world would you want to stay hidden!?" Jack stopped them, standing in front of his friend. "Don't you know how amazing and talented you are!? Stop being so fucking selfish and grow some damn balls!"

Hiccup pushed past him and continued down the hill, ignoring the honks and shouts for the fight to continue. There were also some shouts from a nearby car full of rowdy freshmen calling out names such as 'fag' and other things he couldn't hear clearly. What he _could_ hear, though, was Jack yelling back at them and running toward him, calling out his name.

"Hiccup! Hiccup, wait!"

Finally, he stopped and looked up at the older teen who panted, placing a hand on his shoulder. "Hiccup, listen, I'm sorry okay? Justâ€|you just don't know how amazing you are and it hurts that you don't see it yourself."

He shrugged. "I guess-"

"Hey. Let me make it up to you." Jack smiled. "Let me take you out. To the Halloween festival, that is. It started today, didn't it?"

Hiccup nodded.

"Then, let's go. My treat."

* * *

><p>AN: Sandy is introduced! And he makes a wonderful therapist. A very good listener, indeed. - ADAM**

Reviews = Motivation = Chapters

18. Rides

A/N: I hate not having internet at home. Seriously. Just...can I just...I just wanna...I'll be in my cave of 'this f*ing sucks' if you need me.**

* * *

><p>The sounds coming from the festival echoed throughout the city. Laughs, cries, music. Even the smells of apple and pumpkin pie bounced off the buildings.<p>

Hiccup had been to the festival many times as a child. Or so he'd been told. His father would tell him every year about how he always entered the pie eating contest with Gobber and always ended up getting sick before it ended. He even showed him pictures of him growing up, dancing in the fallen leafs with his mother. But, as he looked down at the carnival rides and friendly competitions from the hill he stood on, he couldn't remember anything. Hiccup sighed and continued walking with Jack, who looked much more excited than his friend.

Unlike Hiccup, Jack didn't go to the Halloween festival; unless he needed to steal pies, money, and other things. And now he was going just to have fun. He smiled as he walked down the hill with Hiccup, occasionally looking over at him with the biggest grin on his face. The fifteen year old would try to smile back with just as much happiness, but, it'd come out sad and rather forced looking.

When they stopped to cross the street, Jack reached over and pressed the crosswalk button.

"Wait." The button said, a little red light flashing above it.

The teen froze and stared at it. He spent most of his time just running into the road and trying not to get hit so, this was new to him. "Didâ€¦it just tell me to wait?" He asked, turning to the brunet.

Hiccup nodded. "Yeah. They're new. For blind people, mostly." He shrugged and stared at him, wondering why he seemed so amazed.

Jack stared the button over a few times before looking up at the crosswalk signs. Then he looked back down at the button and pressed it again. And again. And again.

"Wait. Wait. Wait. Wait. Wait. Wait. Wait. Wait. Wait. Wait."

"Jack, stop. You're going to break it."

"I don't care. Its voice sounds funny." He chuckled, continuing to ignore his friend's annoyed look and press the button until it said that the crosswalk sign was on 'cross'.

It was like this more times than Hiccup would like to admit. He always felt like he was babysitting a three year old child with a short attention span when he spent time with Jack. Yes, there were times where he did act his age; many, in fact, where he seemed to act older than what he really was. But he still seemed like a small boy in public.

When they finally reached the lot the festival was taking place on, Hiccup pulled out his wallet and bought them each twenty tickets. People gave the two looks when he turned to Jack and told him the rules: ask him for money when he needed it, don't do anything stupid, and use the tickets wisely " he wasn't going to buy anymore. He wasn't expecting the older teen to listen to the rules he laid out for him, but, he was hoping that at least he'd follow them without problems. Still, he kept the list of rules tattooed in his mind as they made their way around the rides and booths.

A few children cried and whined as their parents dragged them away from the game booths. Others laughed and continued throwing darts or shooting targets or ringing bells. Stuffed toys hung from the sides of the booths; some already in the arms of girlfriends or honest winners. As Hiccup watched, something inside him began to churn. All of these sights and sounds and smells were familiar. But they weren't at the same time. It made his head throb and his stomach turn cold. His hands began to sweat and the tips of his ears started to burn.

Jack looked over at him and put a hand on his shoulder. "Hey, you alright? You look like you've seen a ghost."

In a way, he was expecting Hiccup to say that he remembers this place. That he remembers the games he played to get the stuffed toys that hung in his room. But, Hiccup shook his head and gave his sad, forced smile.

"I-I'm fine. I'm just not feeling that well." He slipped his hands into his pocket.

"Well, do you want to go home?"

'Please say no.' Part of him begged. 'Please say no.'

Again, he shook his head. "No. No, I'm fine. Maybe I just need to eat something." Hiccup dug into his wallet and pulled out three dollars. He handed them to Jack, giving him an almost stern look. "I'm going to get us something to snack on. You play that water squirting game over there. I'll be right back."

The seventeen year old gave him the biggest, most childish grin; making him regret his choice to let him play a game alone. He sighed and made his way toward the fried dough station several booths down. Fried foods weren't a favorite of his, but, at this moment, he didn't really have much of a choice. They were cheap and filling and were the only real thing (besides cotton candy) he could eat until the pies, cobblers, and other treats were available for sale. He tried to digest the coldness in his stomach as he took two paper plates, both overflowing with the fried, powder sugared dough and walked back to where he thought Jack would be.

A red flashing light grabbed his attention when he approached the game booth. A stuffed toy that sat on top of it began to twirl as the person in charge began congratulating the winner. Hiccup smiled and opened his mouth to say the same when he looked down and got a good look at who exactly won. It wasn't Jack, not by a long shot. But a boy no more than ten with ruffled brown hair and an overly excited sister beside him. His teeth began to grit slightly as he looked

around for his missing friend.

"Haha!" The laugh made him jump and turn all at once. "I won! I'll take the spin top!"

There, standing with an air rifle in his hands, was Jack. He had an even bigger smile on his face and seemed to bounce on his toes as he received a small, wooden spin top. This was slightly stupid of him. Knowing Jack and his hyperactive body, he could have shot someone's eye out.

"Jack," Hiccup said, walking up to him. "what are you doing over here? And why did you want a spin top?"

He smiled and put the rifle down, taking one of the paper plates from him. "I had one as a kid. They were so much fun." Jack began walking with him to one of the picnic tables, visibly eager to try out his new toy.

"Fun?" Hiccup raised an eyebrow and sat down. "How can something like that be so much fun?"

When he came out of the hospital, he was presented with many gifts from teachers, store clerks, and even some nurses. He, from his knowledge, hadn't ever really had something this simple. And he wondered just how exactly fun this small thing was. Jack didn't speak as he ate and spun his top, his eyes bright with happiness. Hiccup couldn't help but watch as it twirled and fell onto its side multiple times. It became a sort of game between the two after a while. 'Longer or Shorter' they called it. In many ways, it was like flipping a coin. As it spun, one would shout 'longer' while the other shouted 'shorter'. If it spun for more than fifteen seconds, the 'longer' shouter would win. Under fifteen seconds and the other would be aloud to laugh in his friend's face. After a half an hour of fists punching seats and mocking laughs, the two threw away their paper plates and started going toward the contests.

Jack smirked, putting an arm around Hiccup's shoulders as he told him about contests he had won: eating contests against Aster, running contests against Tooth, and even staring contests against both of them. Then he began to boast about how he could eat fourteen pies in under a minute.

Hiccup shook his head and chuckled. "Nobody can do that." He said, turning to watch a group of people eat blueberry cobbler with their arms tied behind their backs. "You'd get sick after two. Your stomach couldn't handle that much."

"Oh really?" Jack asked, looking over at the pumpkin, apple, and cranberry pies that were now up for sale. "Well, I could eat fourteen pies in one day."

The brunet rolled his eyes. "We don't have enough money for all that." He dug into his wallet and counted. Only seventeen dollars left. "We don't even have enough for two."

"You buy your pie and I'll get mine."

He knew he was going to regret this as well, but, he nodded and went over to grab himself a pumpkin treat. There was just something about

the smell of pumpkin that made him happy. He wasn't sure what. Sandy and his father had theories, though. They said that maybe, his subconscious was remembering the thanksgivings he used to share with his mother. He thought that maybe he smiled at the smell because he happened to love pumpkin pie.

Placing the ten dollars on the table, he carefully set the delicate pastry in the plastic bag and walked off, waiting for Jack to come back with his own treasure. He leaned against a pole and stared down at his own delightful treat as he waited. It smelt just like the season. Even better, actually. Hiccup leaned down and sniffed the bag's contents with a small smile. A real smile; not the same smile he had been giving Jack.

"_Pumpkin_" A voice asked. It was, in many ways, the same as the festival; familiar but yet, somehow not. And it both filled his heart with joy and jumped it with fright. He thought he was done hearing this voice. "_You're weird._"

"Jack, shut u-" He had to stop himself when he looked up and no one was there again. '_Just like yesterdayâ€|_' He thought, placing a hand on his forehead to see if he was running a temperature.

"Hey!" Jack's sudden voice scared him so much, he couldn't help but jump and scream. The other teen chuckled and put up his hands. "Relax, relax, just me. Hey, what kind did you get?" The seventeen year old began to paw through his younger friend's bag, making a face when he saw the pie. "Oh. Pumpkin. You're weird."

Hiccup scuffed and pulled the bag away from him. "I like what I like." He raised an eyebrow. "What did you get?"

With that big, childish grin, Jack showed him; two blueberry cobblers, four apple pies, five raspberry turnovers, and three cranberry tarts. His other eyebrow raised in concern. "Um, Jack? How did _you_ get all this?"

"Stole 'em." The teen said, shoving half a raspberry turnover into his mouth.

"You stole these? Jack!" Hiccup grabbed the bag out of Jack's hands. "You're not supposed to steal these, you're supposed to buy them!" His voice stayed a whisper as not to attract attention to them.

"Eh." Jack gave him a shrug and pulled the bag back.

All the other could really do at this point was sigh and walk off. Which caused his friend to run after him, calling out noises as he chewed on his snack.

The lot on which the festival was on was rather large. It was big enough to hold many booths, picnic tables, a stage, small rides, a ferries wheel, and even a roller coaster that went around it all. The first thing they decided to go on was the carousel. Simple, slow, something that wouldn't make their fried dough and turnovers rebel against them. Jack happily jumped onto a zebra while Hiccup settled for a dragon. To passers by, it was an odd sight, indeed. There were maybe two adults on the ride with their children and, of course, two teenagers amongst the rest. One with strange hair â€" white with

brown roots " who smiled like a doof and another keeping his head down, trying not to look at anyone.

The second ride Jack got to choose. And sadly, it was the roller coaster. Hiccup stared at it as they waited in line and felt a cold chill go up his spine. Most everything else was silent when the riders of the coaster screamed, looping this way and that. His stomach dropped when he heard them, his palms began to sweat again.

'_What is with me today_?' He thought to himself as he rubbed his hands on his pants. First the voice, now getting nervous over a little ride? He must really not be feeling well after all.

"Scared?" Jack asked, smirking slightly.

Hiccup shook his head and gave him his most determined look. "Not at all."

He should have said yes. He should have walked off and told his friend he'd wait for him by the cotton candy. It would have saved him the embarrassment of getting sick as they looped around. He wouldn't have had to borrow a staff uniform and take a shower in the recreation center down the street. Now, he walked around with sopping wet hair, people stopping him every few minutes to ask where the bathrooms are. He could hear Jack try and fail to swallow a laugh next to him, but, he kept his head down.

The sun had finally gone down and the lights to the whole festival began to glow. Most of the children that were there earlier were now long gone and were replaced with rowdy teenagers. Some of them were even drinking beer and vodka they hid in their coats. With the smell of alcohol and baked goods mixing together, Hiccup felt the urge to run into one of the port-o-potties. His stomach churned even more at the thought of their smell.

Jack stared down at him when his laughing fit finally stopped. He didn't understand why the fifteen year old wanted to stay here so bad. The kid clearly was sick; his face was pale and his hands were shaking. So why didn't he want to leave?

He looked down at the tickets in his hands, trying to ignore a group of drunk teens not too far away. '_Use them wisely_', he remembered Hiccup saying. And that's when he looked up and saw it. The brightly lit ferris wheel. Maybe it'd calm the other down. So, he smiled and put an arm around his friend, dragging him, in a way, to the rather large ride. Only a few people seemed to want to go on it; mostly just girlfriends with their boyfriends and older people who can't really do anything else other than games due to medical issues.

The two sat next to each other in their cart and pulled the bar down to their laps. The staff member managing the ride began to tell everyone the rules. Basic things really; no waving your arms about, no pushing the bar away, and no swinging. This made Jack give a fake, sarcastic sigh and a small whine of 'that really sucks'. As they went up, though, he just smiled and stared down at the ant people below.

It was weird for Hiccup, actually. To see the older teen sit this still was nothing short of a miracle. "Why did you want to go on this?"

He shrugged. "Just wanted to. Besides, you don't look good. Thought maybe the air would be fresher all the way up here."

And he was right about that. No beer or pies or port-o-potties. Just regular air. He smiled slightly and nodded, resting his chin in his hand, his arm leaning against the side of the cart. They were half way up when the silence was broken again. "Did Snotface beat you the other day?"

Hiccup looked over at Jack and raised an eyebrow, noticing the protective look. "What?"

"Did Snotlout beat you yesterday?" He looked away and stared at the sky. "You can't pretend like it didn't happen. You still have cuts and bruises all over your body."

The brunet sighed and looked away. Nothing got pass him, did it? He bit his tongue a few times before he finally nodded and glanced at him. "Just don't do anything stupid like beat him or something. It'll only make things worse."

"If he touches you again, I'll beat him." Jack looked at him. "Someone has to stand up for you if you won't stand up for yourself."

Hiccup stared at him for a moment, wondering if he was serious. He didn't even notice how close they were until he felt the other's hot breath hit him in the face. The smell of apple and peppermint overtook his nose, seemingly lulling him. He closed his eyes as he felt himself lean toward Jack, his lips just slightly parted. Their lips didn't completely meet, only grazing each other. When he pulled away, he could taste him as if they had kissed. Mint and cold air filled his mouth. His body shook slightly and almost begged for more. But he couldn't do this. No, not with Jack. Jack was male, just like him. It was wrong. It was against everything his father was for. What _would _his father say if he found out?

His eyes darted around as he thought of every possible thing that could happen. His father could kick him out of the house. Or worse: just completely ignore him like he never even existed in the first place. And he couldn't betray his father's values. They were all they had left. If he lost his father, he would have nothing. The sweat on his forehead dripped over his eyebrow.

"Don't." He squeaked out, his voice sounding dry at first. "Justâ€¦don't."

Jack stared at him for a moment before nodding and sitting back in place like nothing ever happened. "Alright. I won't."

* * *

><p>It's hard to stay in the shadows when there aren't many shadows to hide in. It's even harder to look innocent when you know you are beyond guilty. Onyx was trying to do both as she walked around, trying to avoid looks and pointing fingers. Her grip on her camera tightened as she walked away from the festival. A small smirk began to play on her lips the closer she got to the factory and, for once, she actually felt like letting out a laugh.<p>

Red Death stood by the front door and nodded at her when she came into view. "Got it?" He asked as he unlocked the door.

Onyx nodded and showed him the camera. She was a small woman of very few words. Every once in a while, she'd let out a noise. A grunt or a groan. Once, she even insulted Aster on his mask. It was just one word, but, it was more than what most of them heard from her.

As always, the door opened with a creak and it echoed throughout the large room. A few people could be heard talking in their rooms all around. Some were even laughing and shouting, clearly drunk. The two ignored them this time. There were more important things to do than deal with idiotic drunks. Although, as they walked by, Red Death slammed his fists against each door.

The hallway became darker and darker the closer they got to Pitch's study. It was a small room with stolen books stacked all around; touching the ceiling and covering most of the floor. His desk sat in the middle with papers falling off the sides. When Onyx and Red Death walked in, he looked up from his recent work and sent them a unnerving grin.

"Ah!" He said as he stood up. "You've come back with pictures this time."

Onyx nodded and handed him the camera, shooting him the same grin. He obviously looked pleased as he flipped through each photo; Hiccup and Jack playing at a game booth, the two holding bags full of treats, and finally, Jack leaning toward Hiccup on the ferries wheel, trying to steal a kiss. His face looked to be happy, but inside, he was burning. This child which he took in when nobody else would, who he loved like a son, was going about having relationships. And soon, he would leave him to start a family. A family he would not be part of and be shunned once more.

Pitch turned the camera off and placed it in his 'nightmare's' hands. "Perfect. Thank you very much. Now, leave me to my work."

* * *

><p>AN: Alrighty. Might not post something on Halloween. Then again, I might. Who knows? If I don't; Happy Halloween! Stay safe! Shoot zombies! - ADAM**

Reviews = Motivation = Chapters

19. Happiness

A/N: Hopefully two chapters today! Possibly, yeah. I actually ate, so, I'm pretty focused. GLAZED BLUEBERRY DOUGHNUTS! I also might have had some soda, so, bare with me. Me and sugar don't mix very well. It's as bad as putting salt in cake.

* * *

><p>It was like the first day of Junior year all over again; his hands were sweating, his eyes were darting here and there, his heart jumped from one end of the football field to the other. And him

standing in line with the others who wished to be part of the team didn't help the situation at all. In fact, it made it worse.<p>

As the coach told them the basic rules of their tryouts, Hiccup looked all around. Snotlout and Tuffnut chuckled, whispering to each other as they pointed at certain students, more than likely making bets. This only made his heart beat even faster and sweat drip off his nose, so, he decided to look around at the bleachers. Girlfriends sat waving at their boyfriends who nervously smiled back. Best friends stared at their phones, occasionally looking up to tell their friend to kick some ass. The coach would then turn around and yell back at them to knock it off. And, as he chuckled with the rest of the students, that's when he saw him.

Jack jumped from seat to seat, Fishlegs trotting behind him. Hiccup's heart stopped and he felt all the color leave his face as he watched teen sit, waving at him happily and very much like a child.

'_Oh gods, he's hereâ€|_' He thought to himself. '_What do I do?_ Yesterday was so embarrassingâ€|_'

Everything drowned out as he thought of last night. All he could think about was how forced Jack's smile looked when he told him goodnight and how awkward the rest of the ferries wheel ride was. Some part of him began to feel guilty like he should have done what Jack wanted. But another part fluttered as he thought about how the other tasted of mint and maybeâ€|chocolate was it? Now that he thought about it, there was another taste but, he didn't have the time to figure it out or even notice it.

The sound of the coach's whistle brought him back into focus and he started running laps around the field, following what everyone else was doing. Coach's rules were simple: do what is asked of you a hundred fold. If you don't and are pointed at while he whistles, you are out.

Hiccup watched as two oblivious friends started goofing off during the jumping jacks and were whistled at right away. He looked up at Fishlegs and Jack who were cheering him on in their own way.

Jack was holding up a sign telling him to do his best while Fishlegs waved a small flag. The blond turned to the older teen as they watched their friend do a few more sudden laps. "I think he'll make it. Hiccup can run for miles without getting tiered."

"Oh, I know." He said, recalling their first game of capture the flag. The brunet was always guarding the flag and for a very good reason.

Fishlegs raised an eyebrow. "You do?"

"Yes." Jack nodded and looked down at him. "I've known Hiccup longer than he's known himself."

To everyone else, it would sound odd. But, it was true. Jack did know Hiccup longer than he had known himself. And, in knowing that, he felt both proud and depressed. Proud that he knew every creak and corner of who he cares most about but depressed because he knew partly why the other almost completely forgot himself.

The memory made him shake and his hand gripped the hospital mask inside his pocket. No, he had to focus on something else. He had to focus on the Hiccup trying to catch a football down the field and failing.

"Come on, Hic!" The teen said standing up. "You can do it! Keep your eye on the ball! Do the math in your head!"

"'Do the math in your head?'" Fishlegs asked.

Jack shrugged and sat back down, crossing his arms. "It was one of the only things I could think of to help motivate him. I'm not very good at it, okay?"

In some, strange way, hearing him talk seemed to help. All Hiccup could think about as the words processed through his mind was running. He just wanted to get away from all this nervousness. He wanted to get away from the awkwardness that would surely happen after tryouts were over and it was just him and his friends on the field. When he heard Jack's remark about math, though, he turned his head to tell him how stupid it sounded. And as he did, his arms went up over his head and caught something. Pulling his arms back down, he slowly stopped until he was just standing there, staring mindlessly at the ball in his hands.

The rest of the afternoon went reasonably smoothly after that. In fact, the brunet surprised many of the teammates in some parts of the tryouts. In others, he made them laugh. The coach was caught laughing as well once or twice but quickly stopped and began telling the rest of the team to end their laughter as well. By the end of the two hours of tryouts, mostly everyone was tired, panting, and about ready to collapse on the ground.

Jack and Fishlegs climbed off the bleachers and ran over to their friend's side. The blonde patted him on the back and started going on about how awesome he looked.

"Yeah, you were pretty great out there." Jack said with a smile, placing his hand on the Junior's shoulder.

A wave of different emotions started bubbling up when he felt that slightly warm hand against his thin frame. He felt surprised, scared, happy, and embarrassed all at once. The feeling of being scared was understandable. Jack had that same look in his eye yesterday on the ferries wheel. It was calm and smooth, gentle but yet sparkling with excitement. Yes, he was scared that he'd try to do something again. And that's why he was embarrassed. If anyone saw them on the field together like they were yesterday, it'd be on the front page of the school's newsletter. Then his dad would hear about it. But, as he started thinking more and more about what happened, he started feeling happy. The taste of cool peppermint, he could feel it in his mouth as he just stared at him.

The walk home was more awkward than being on the field. Hiccup kept a good distance away from Jack; walking on the other side of Fishlegs for most of it. When the large teen turned the corner to go down his street, Hiccup felt scared once more. Every few seconds he would glance up at the older boy until he was caught. He even apologized under his breath.

"Hic, listen." Jack started. "I'm sorry about yesterday, okay? I didn't mean to go that far. I justâ€¦" He sighed and shook his head. "I'm sorry."

Hiccup looked up at him completely. "It's fine. Really. Don't beat yourself up over it." He had never seen his friend thisâ€¦down. He felt almost guilty for not letting him take a kiss. For not letting him get his way.

The teen smiled down at him. "You don't hate me?"

"What?" He rolled his eyes. "Gods, no, Jack. I don't hate you. Why would I hate you? Because you tried to make a move on me? Because you're secretly gay?"

"I'm not secretly gay, Hiccup."

"Oh yeah? Then why didn't you tell me?"

"You never asked."

The look on the brunet's face was priceless. He looked overly confused; his eyebrows just barely connecting with his eyes as he thought hard. He used to have this look as a child whenever he came across a fork in the road. The first time Jack had seen it was when he offered to bring hot chocolate and a snack to their spot in their field. He had asked his young friend if he wanted re-heated pizza or oatmeal with cream and fruits. The look only became funnier when he started laughing at the smaller boy, making him think even harder about why the other was laughing.

Jack chuckled lightly and patted him on the head. "I'll see you tomorrow." He said, making his way to the backyard and up the tree house ladder.

Hiccup stared at him, his hand on the doorknob as he continued trying to think very thoroughly about every conversation the two ever had. He blinked a few times when he realized that he really did never ask. He assumed that his friend was heterosexual. And anyone else that knew him would think the same seeing as every teenage girl in the high school swooned over him.

Nonetheless, Hiccup shook his head and walked inside, smiling slightly at the smell of dinner cooking on the stove. Mashed potatoes, country fried steak, gravy; Gobber must be watching over him tonight.

He walked into the kitchen and placed his backpack on the back of his chair. "Hey, Gobber."

"Ah! Hiccup! Welcome home!" The rather large police officer turned to him with a steaming wooden spoon in his hand. "How was school?"

The teen shrugged. "It was alright. Got lots of homework to do tonight."

"Why don't you get started then?"

It was easier to do paper work at the kitchen table than it was at his desk. The table was reasonably new where as his desk had been

around since Stoick was about his age. Maybe younger. And its surface was covered in carvings and ink stains, marker drawings and coffee marks. It was quite the mess. Hiccup had asked a few times before for a new desk; one that didn't have an old wad of dried gum stuck to the inside of one drawer. But, his father always told him that if it wasn't broken, you shouldn't replace it. So, he decided to do his homework in the kitchen.

Every few minutes, he caught himself thinking about Jack. Mainly that sad look on his face on the ferries wheel and earlier that night in the driveway. It made him chew his pencil and scribble on his notebook. Gobber joked with him when he saw the teen do this, telling him that eating the wood would ruin his appetite.

He hardly got through a quarter of his work by the time dinner was finished and on the table. When he went to eat his mashed potatoes, he used the end of his pencil as a fork. The craziest part was he ate like that until he got to his country fried steak.

"What's troubling you?" Gobber asked, noticing the confused look on Hiccup's face as he stared at the potato covered eraser.

He shrugged and looked down at his feet. "Nothing. Just school, I guess."

You had to have been Helen Keller to think he was telling the truth. The tone in his voice gave him away as well as the shifting in his seat. It made the older man smile. "Is it about seeing Astrid tomorrow?"

"Huh?" He had completely forgotten about the party, truthfully. "Oh, yeah, I guess."

Gobber nodded with a smile and started cleaning off the table. "Mmm, I see. Tell me what's troubling you."

"I'd rather notâ€¦"

"Oh, come on. It can't be that bad."

'_Oh yesâ€¦yes it can._' Hiccup sighed and rolled his eyes, playing with the blue and white bracelet on his wrist. "There's thisâ€¦_friend_ I have at school."

"A friend, is it?"

"It is." The teen nodded. "And he has this other friend whoseâ€¦in a sense, coming onto him." He placed his head on the table as he felt his face flush. This was completely stupid in his mind. "And he doesn't know how to deal with it. He told me earlier today that he kind ofâ€¦_enjoyed_ his friend coming onto him."

The taste of cool peppermint danced on his tongue and when he breathed in through his mouth, it was like winter air. It calmed his senses for only a moment until he heard his father in the back of his head; saying that he was a disgrace and that he disappointed him beyond repair. He shook his head, placing his hands on his ears.

"But, this friend I have is afraid."

"Afraid of what, Hiccup? There is nothing your friend should be afraid of."

"You don't understand." He groaned and looked up at his uncle-like figure, watching him wash the dishes. "His fath-I mean, his family would hate him if he ever went out with his friend! A-and plus, it's wrong! It's just not how things are supposed to be!"

Gobber turned to the boy and raised an eyebrow. At first, he thought that this 'friend' was the child sitting not too far away. But now, he wasn't too sure. "How do you think things should be, boyo?"

Hiccup shrugged, leaning back in his chair as he crossed his arms. "I think he should find someone else; someone that would make everything better and make it so that families don't get even more broken than they already are."

"Is that so?" He turned the faucet and sat down across from the brunet. "And being miserable would make everyone happy and together?"

"Yes." Hiccup sighed. "Noâ€¦I don't knowâ€¦the world is too confusing."

The police officer didn't say much after that. He stood back up after a moment and returned to doing the dishes, occasionally looking over his shoulder at the slumped fifteen year old. Gobber had known the boy since he was tall enough to climb onto the couch and he had never seen him so down and confused.

"You know, Hiccup, sometimes you have to let people down."

"That's not helping."

He chuckled and dried off his hands. "Sometimes, you have to do what makes you happy. You can't be trying to make everyone happy when you're not happy yourself." Gobber grabbed a soda from the refrigerator, snapping it open with ease. "Sure, you might disappoint a few people. And yeah, maybe you'll even get lashed at."

Hiccup rolled his eyes and shook his head. This was crazy. Maybe he'll be lashed at? Might disappoint a few people? He'll get lashed at by everyone, all the people he cares about would be utterly angry at him for even thinking such things. He felt the need to pull his tongue out to get rid of Jack's taste. And, he almost did, until he heard his uncle-of-sorts clear his throat and continue.

"But, at least you'll be happy. And when you are, nobody can take that away from you."

* * *

><p>AN: Not my best chapter. Hopefully not my worst. - ADAM**

Reviews = Motivation = Chapters

A/N: Oh my gods, you guys, chapter 20! I've never gone this high up before! Anyway, sorry for the late..ness...The week of Thanksgiving and even after are pretty intense. What with all the cooking, cleaning, entertaining of the little brother, getting everything set up...Yeah. For all those in America, how was your Thanksgiving? And for everyone, what are YOUR plans for the holidays?

* * *

><p>It still wasn't enough. He had been begging all day and there still wasn't enough for him to go to the corner store and get himself something to eat for dinner.

_Jack sighed at the coins in his hand. He tried to ignore the growling of his stomach which was a sound that was now as familiar as a car horn. And the pain was just as familiar as well. It was an empty sort of pain, the kind that would drive certain people to go insane enough to steal or mug someone. Just like those old time robbers in cartoons during Saturday mornings. _

_The pain traveled from the pits of his stomach all the way up to his throat and shoulders. It made him want to curl up into the corner and cry. He even felt tears welling up in his eyes. _

_But he couldn't. He promised his best friend he wouldn't. He said he'd stay strong for him. So, instead of crying in the corner, he just sat there and watched the rain fall. _

_Passers by would glance at him. Some would even stop talking on the phone and stare for a while before going back to talking to their girlfriends about the homeless kid they found on the corner of 1__st__ and 9__th__. At one point, a child about his age walked up to him and offered the eight year old a honey bun roll. And he almost accepted the small gift until the mother of the child began scolding her. _

His stomach growled again, making him sigh. "I know, stomach. But we can't get anything to eat." He whispered as it started to rain.

_A part of him started to tare him in half. One side of his mind told him to go into the store and take what he needed; an umbrella, a blanket, one of those pillows he saw on television that one time, and a bunch of food. Bread and soda, mostly. As well as some beef jerky and maybe a chocolate bar or two. _

_The other half, however, told him not to. How was he going to help his friend from behind bars? And he was too young to go to jail. The other prisoners would eat him as a snack then spit him out and have him for left over night. _

_He shook silently, holding his knees close to his chest. Far away from home, his best friend in the hospital, no shelter, no food, freezing cold&€|it truly couldn't get worse than this. _

_"No place to go?" _

_The voice completely caught him off guard. He gasped and jumped slightly, gripping his legs even tighter. In front of him knelt a dark haired man, his eyes were an eerie sort of yellow. The kind that

mustard usually was. _

"What's the matter, child?" He asked, seeing Jack shake more violently. "Have you lost your way? Or do you not have a family?"

_Jack shifted and looked down at his feet. His mother had taken him into a neighboring state ten months ago and it has only been a month since his 'escape', but, he ditched his shoes a few cities back. They were worn and the soles were torn off, anyway. But, as he looked at his feet now, he finally noticed just how pale his skin was. _

_He shook his head and looked up at the mysterious man. "I don'tâ€|"
In some ways, this was true. _

A mother doesn't ignore her son and she certainly doesn't yell at him when he cries for attention. She didn't even have the heart to go looking for him his first night away from home. He saw her through the window; sitting with her boyfriend of two months, drinking wine and watching a movie. The woman didn't even care.

_And his father never called him back or even sent him a letter. There was one time where his dad picked up the phone and said hello, but, as soon as he heard the title his son had given him, he hung up with a groan. _

_Biologically, yes, he had a family. But at the moment, there was nobody there to call him theirs. _

The man smiled and held out his hand. "Come."

_Jack stared at the grayish skin, shaking his head. He had heard stories of strangers who use children in very upsetting ways. There was no way he was going to end up being one of those saddening news stories. _

_"I don't bite." He said with a small chuckle. "I'm here to help. My name is Pitch. What is yours, little shivering snowflake?" _

He batted his brown eyes up at Pitch and took his hand. It was so warm, so inviting. "I-I'm Jack." He cleared his throat. "Jackson Overland."

_Pitch helped the boy stand, keeping him up easily with one arm. His frame was thin like a starved ghost and his skin was as pale as snow. He smiled. "You look more like a 'Frost' than an 'Overland'. How about we change that name?" _

For a moment, Jack began to panic. The hospital mask that he had been holding all week was now wet in his palm from sweat and rain. If he changed his name, would Hiccup still know it was him when he woke up? Would things still be the same if his last name was different?

"Well, just think about it, Little Snowflake." The older man said, walking with him into a car. "You don't have to change it quite yet."

_It was hard to resist the warmth coming from inside the car. The November rain felt more like December hail, making every part of him

numb and soaked. He quickly climbed into the car and looked at its driver. The man was completely covered in red except for a few stripes of white or black. He even had red contact lenses that dug into his own natural brown eyes when they looked at each other through the rearview mirror. _

_Pitch sat next to him and placed a towel around the boy, followed by a blanket. "This is my most loyal cousin. You may call him Red."

_

_Jack nodded, trying to hide himself in the warmth of the towel and blanket. At first, it all stung. But that's what happens when you're freezing cold and, all of a sudden, you're warm. It was like needles pricking every inch of his skin. He continued to tell himself that this was normal, that it'd go away soon. And, sure enough, as they stopped in front of a large building, the needles stopped pricking. He was as warm as buttered toast. _

_Red stepped out of the car first and opened Pitch's door. The small boy watched his savior of sorts climb out with grace and ease, looking back at the child with his arm extended. It all seemed strange to him. When he looked up at the building, he began wondering why they chose an abandoned ice cream factory. Why not a hotel or someplace with more working lights? But Jack didn't complain. He simply took the man's hand and followed him inside, keeping as far away from Red as he possibly could. _

_Inside were many masked figures. Some were goofing off while others looked to be working hard. Each person had a plain sweatshirt on but nobody had the same shade of a color. It was like a color scheme wheel exploded and gave birth to at least thirty children. _

A woman with teeth dangling from her mask walked up to the three, a tall man behind her. "Oh my god, what happened?" She asked, looking Jack over.

_ "I found this child on the street." Pitch said and placed a hand on the boy's head, ruffling his chocolate brown hair. "He was shivering and as pale as a snowflake." _

_ "He still is." The man said. He knelt in front of the boy and stared into his eyes. Jack raised an eyebrow as he stared back. This man looked like he hadn't slept in a week. His eyes were bloodshot and the bags under them were half way down his cheeks. "What's your name?" He asked, his accent thick._

_ "If a kangaroo could talk, it'd sound like you." The eight year old said. "And what's your name?" He tried his hardest to imitate the accent, but, it didn't work as well as planned._

_The man groaned and stood up, looking down at the woman as she placed a hand on his shoulder. "I'm Anna and this grump puss is Aster." _

_Jack laughed at the insult she had given her friend. "It's nice to meet you." He said and shook her hand. "I should go. I need toâ€uh, visit a friend." _

_ "I'm sorry, Jackson. But, you can't go anywhere." Red closed the door, its echo making him shake again. "You're part of our family

now. "_

* * *

><p>"Ow!" The eighteen year old exclaimed as he sat up, hitting his head against a branch. He quickly looked around, making sure he was still in the old tree house. 'Aâ€|dreamâ€|it was just a dreamâ€|'

That memory had been haunting him since the day it happened. He could still hear Pitch's voice clearly in his ears; telling him that he was part of their family and that he couldn't go anywhere. After his first night, he continued to try and 'escape'. He had broken his arm, both legs, and even a few ribs trying to get to the hospital Hiccup was at during the time. Technically, he wasn't allowed inside, but, just seeing the light on in his room was enough to calm him. Aster had brought him out three weeks after he had entered the 'family' and watched as the boy climbed up to the second floor, looking into the smaller boy's window.

Jack panted as he tried to calm himself down. The only thing scarier than a nightmare is one that happened and it took him at least half an hour before he decided to jump down and walk over to the brunet's bedroom window. He held his breath as he watched like he had all those years ago. Of course, Hiccup wasn't sleeping. He was sitting at his mangled desk which was just under the window, doing his homework no doubt. He did get a lot of it today.

With a curled up, shaking hand, he tapped on the glass to get his friend's attention. The younger teen jumped slightly and looked up at him with wide eyes at first; until he opened the window and rolled his eyes. "Jack, what are you doing?" He whispered.

"Can I sleep in here tonight?" The other asked, climbing in as gracefully as he could. "You need the company, anyway. With all this homework, you need someone to keep your hair from turning gray."

"_You're_ making my hair turn gray." Hiccup whispered under his breath as he tried to get all of his papers back onto his desk.

Jack smiled and laid down on the brunet's bed, throwing a small stuffed animal up into the air. At first, all he did was sit there and watch his friend with a smile. He occasionally asked what he was working on and if he needed help, but, he just wanted to be with him. Just the feeling of another human in the same room as him seemed so calming. The fear and shakes he had when he first woke up were gone when he started to crack a few jokes. They were those kinds of jokes that were so overused and completely not funny that you just had to laugh at how dumb they were. Hiccup finally turned around to listen to them and even try to make a few of his own. They never really made sense nor were they funny, but, Jack laughed anyway. Just hearing him stumble over his words and seeing him awkwardly shift in his chair made him smile as it was.

The two ended up laying on the floor, laughing at stories they told each other. Hiccup started off with the story of how he and Fishlegs got stuck in the elevator at City hall for almost an hour. It wasn't very funny at the time, sitting there, thinking that the small compartment would fall and send them both to their maker. But,

talking about it now, a few years later, it was pretty funny how they began to plan an escape using only shoestrings and faith. Jack's story was hilarious as well.

When the teen was fourteen, he chased a squirrel up a tree for stealing the rest of his burger. He climbed half way up before slipping on mounds of sap and ended up falling down nearly two stories. The poor boy ended up with a broken arm and leg. Hiccup looked shocked as he heard but started laughing when Jack began telling him how awkward it was to walk around.

The funny stories continued for about another hour, both of them going back and forth to try and outdo the other. It wasn't until the brunet started to fall asleep that they decided to quit the jokes. Jack tried for riddle talk, but, when he looked over at his friend, he figured it was time to just stay put and enjoy each other's company. At one point, he turned to face Hiccup and connected the freckles on his face, hardly touching his cheek with the tip of his finger. It reminded him of the old days when all they had was each other, their snowy field, and a sky full of crystal stars. He even felt his lip twitch as he held himself back, not wanting to kiss him in case he woke up.

With a sigh, he stood up and grabbed both the pillow and blanket off the bed. He carefully lifted Hiccup's head and placed the pillow underneath; putting the blanket over him when he was sure he was still asleep. Jack sighed as he stepped over him and opened the bedroom door.

Everything was different at night. Every creak that the house made sent fear up his spine and down his legs. '_It's just the houseâ€¦it's just the houseâ€¦_' He continued to tell himself, tiptoeing into the hallway.

Not too far away was Toothless' bed. He couldn't tell at first what it was until he heard the jingle of dog tags and two eyes flash in his direction. The black lab began to growl.

"Shhh! Toothless, no!" Jack whispered. The last thing he wanted was to wake up the rest of the house. "It's okay! I'm a friend!"

Toothless snorted and laid his head back down, keeping his eyes on the white haired teen as he made his way toward the study.

The boy looked all around the small room. An extremely old desk sat not too far from him, a few bookshelves stood up against the walls, papers and books were stacked all over the place. It made his head hurt just looking at it all.

In the corner, almost completely new, was a filing cabinet. It held stickers all over its sides and even had a marker drawing of a dragon on the side of it. He smiled, thinking of a tiny Hiccup making his way through all the paperwork to create the small masterpiece. Jack weaved his way through and around stacks of papers and books, ending up right in front of the cabinet. It was as good as any place to start looking. And, if what Aster told him was right, the most important things are usually filed properly.

With a paper clip he found on top of the cabinet, he began working on

the lock. He focused on the sounds it made, the creaks and bangs. Lock picking was one of his first lessons when he was first brought into the family. Hijacking a car was the second but it wasn't as fun as learning how to twist the gears inside a lock. It was something about the way the vibrations shook his hand. It was like holding onto a washer while it's on but not as violent. As he twisted everything around for the last time, he heard a click and froze. Locks weren't supposed to make that loud of a sound.

Jack stood up straight and turned toward the doorway. There, staring him down with gun in hand, was Stoick. "I thought I told you to stay away from us."

'_So, he does recognize meâ€|_' He thought as he put his hands up. "I come in peace. Don't shoot."

The man stared at him for a moment more before putting his gun back in its holster. "I told you to stay away from us. To stay away from my son."

The teen slowly started making his way toward the doorway, his hands behind his head. "You did, but-"

"You were a bad influence on him. You were giving him theseâ€|these _thoughts_. You were turning him into one of you!" Stoick whispered in the angriest way possible.

Jack didn't know what to say or do. He just gave him a sort of glare, thinking about how ignorant he was. Those thoughts that Hiccup had as a child were not given to him. He thought of them on his own. There was no real influence. The boy just saw it around him and made an opinion.

He stared at his friend's father, slowly making his way back to the cabinet. "I wasn't _turning_ him into anything." He said. "But, _you_ were making him scared. And he still is scared."

"I'm not scaring my son." Stoick glared at him fiercely. "I'm his father. And you are trespassing" The rather large police officer moved out of the way, letting the light from the hallway shine in. "Leave."

There were many harsh words stinging his tongue. He had half a mind to tell the idiot to leave himself. And he would too, if he wasn't Hiccup's father. If he wasn't, he would use every cuss ever created to tell the man off. He would call the man a variety of names that have to do with certain activities and animals. Sailors would bow at just his shadow at how great he was at the sport.

But, Stoick _was_, unfortunately, Hiccup's father. And starting a tongue lashing duel with him might only make trouble for his Hiccup. So, with much anger, he walked out and started down the street, toward 'home'.

But not before stopping to hide in a cloud of bushes where he would waitâ€|

* * *

><p>AN: This was my favorite chapter to write. Honestly.

Just...the interactions and everything. - ADAM**

Reviews = Motivation = Chapters

21. Worries

A/N: There is no way I could tell you guys how sorry I am. Really. But, good news is, I have internet at home now, so, chapters will be posted more often. Enjoy.

* * *

><p>There was only one other time he felt this odd. It was when the city had cut down the old willow tree on the corner of his street. Walking to school the next day, it was strange not having it right there, tickling him with it's leafs and branches. Not having Jack walk him to school was downright weird. That morning, he spent almost half an hour looking for him. He checked everywhere; his closets, the tree house, even the kitchen. But, the teen was nowhere to be found.<p>

Fishlegs walked up to him with a raised eyebrow. "Heyâ€|where's Jack?" He asked, looking all around.

"Don't know." Hiccup shrugged. "I woke up and he wasn't there."

"Maybe he went back to his house."

This had passed through his mind many times, what Jack called home. At first, he thought that his friend lived on a bench due to his lack of personal hygiene and growling stomach. Then he sat down one night he thought about every possible scenario. Maybe he lives alone and his water just gets shut off. Or perhaps he was one of those people who look poor but are actually very rich. It was a subject he always wanted to ask but never really thought about it when he hung around him.

The rest of the day was like how they used to be without Jack. Snotlout teased him and threatened to beat him after school like how he did the other day, Fishlegs swapped foods with him during lunch, and class work went on like usual.

Gym class was probably the most dramatic part of his day. Most of the other students that tried out for the football team weren't picked and would walk out of the coach's office practically in tears. Some came out lashing at others, wanting to pick a fight. Only a few walked out, giving high fives to friends with smiles on their faces. When everyone was done changing from their PE gear to their regular school clothes, the coach called Hiccup in with a slightly stern look. It was very hard to know what was on the coach's mind seeing as he always looked so firm. The brunet thought the worst, though, as he walked into the office and sat down.

If anyone were to tell him that the coach had more trophies and sports memorabilia than his father, he wouldn't believe it. But, as he looked around and saw that almost every inch of wall was covered with team photos, trophies, and medals, all he could think about was how small his father's collection looked against this.

"So, you ran well yesterday, Hiccup." The coach started. "But you don't have a lot of muscle, do you?" He looked the fifteen year old all over, taking note of his skinny arms and small frame. "Why do you want to be on the team?"

Why _did _he want to be on the team? He clearly didn't have the natural athletic ability and obviously was more focused on his class work than anything else. It took him a minute to think about all the things he could say to the coach. He could tell him that he didn't know why, that he just wanted to. Or he could tell him that he just needed an extra curricular activity and the school newspaper was already full on members.

Then he remembered his father. How proud yet sad he sounded whenever he told stories about the months they expected the boy. Stoick would go out every month and pick up something new for the baby; sports related clothes, chewable baseballs and footballs. Then he told his son about how, when he was actually born, he rejected all those things. The only thing they had left to give him that he might actually play with was a small, stuffed dragon. Hiccup ended up crying every time he saw it but, kept it around as he got older.

He sat up straighter and looked the coach in the eyes, trying to be as firm as he could. "For my father. I want to make him proud of me."

The man across from him simply smiled. He had seen many kids tell him the same thing in his lifetime, how much they wanted to impress their parents. Most of the time, he blew them off and told them that it wasn't good enough. But there were times, just like this one, when he knew the parent in question personally.

Stoick won them more trophies than any other team member. He could tackle a fully grown man down to the ground so hard, they'd pass out. He was the perfect football star and it'd be hard for anyone to fill his shoes. And seeing as his child was so desperate to make his father happy, he nodded.

"Alright." The coach stood up and held out his hand. "Practice starts tomorrow after school. Don't be late."

Hiccup sat there for a moment and blinked a few times before reaching over, shaking the man's hand. He was in complete shock as anyone like him would be. When he walked out of the office, he quietly told Fishlegs what happened. This caught the attention of Snotlout and it made him waltz right over, demanding to know what happened. And, of course, this lead to a few head dunks in a flushing toilet for both of them.

After school, though, this was merely a minor thing. As Hiccup sat in Mr. Sanderson's office, playing with one of the many toys, his mind kept going back to where Jack was. The white haired teen was a pain and was annoying, always popping up when he just stopped thinking about him and constantly playing games with his head. He also seemed to flirt with almost every girl in school which seemed to hurt him a bit and would just crawl into his room without invitation, but, it bothered him not knowing where Jack was.

There was one day where he didn't sleep in the tree house and it

stuck out in his mind as the Unknown Night. The next morning when Hiccup was walking with him to school, he noticed that the other was trying not to look at him completely. It annoyed him that he'd look everyone else in the eye but not him. So, after school, he turned him around and saw what looked to be bags under his eyes. That is until he looked closer. One of the bags was made of makeup and the other was covered in it as to hide something. Washing off the pale powder, he saw a black eye. How he got that, he never said. And it worried him to see Jack wonder off after that.

Right now, at this very moment, the reckless boy could be lying in a ditch, dead. "Or worse." Hiccup said as he listed everything off. "He could be alive, raped and dirty." He looked over at Mr. Sanderson. "He's gay, you know. And it makes me worry that someone will beat him because of it."

Sandy stood up and walked over to the brunet, placing a hand on his shoulder. It was times like these he wished he could talk. Wished he could actually help people like Hiccup. Instead, he just smiled and patted him softly. It was the best he could do.

Hiccup stared back at him. For some reason, Mr. Sanderson always seemed to make him tired. It was just the calmness about him that relaxed everyone in the room. Slowly, he felt his mind ease and his heart go at a healthy pace.

"Maybe he's just at the library or something. Yeah!" The session went on for another hour and the two took turns guessing where Jack might be. What they didn't know was, at one point, they were right.

Jack was in the old park. He had sat himself down on one of the swings, clutching something desperately in his hands. It was a folder overly full with papers. Documents that accused people from his 'family' of murder, theft, and more. He was sure that there were more than just these in other places, but, it was a start.

The wind seemed to get colder as a black car pulled up next to the slide across the park. The children didn't stop playing and the parents didn't give the figure that walked out a glance. They just continued to go about their day as Pitch walked up to Jack, dressed more warmly than the other ever remembered being.

He sat down next to the teen and held out a leather gloved hand. "Are you sure these are the right ones?"

"Yes, I'm sure." He nodded, giving him the folder. "You're going to leave them alone now, right? The Haddocks? They didn't do anything wrong."

"They locked up part of our family, _your _family, Frost. That is something we could never forgive." Pitch hissed. When a few children looked over, he smiled and waved before continuing in a whisper. "And don't tell me you have a soft spot for them. They aren't like me, you know. They won't take you in with open arms like I had done."

It was a lie. He knew it. Hiccup had taken him in with open arms and an open door. His father might not ever do the same, but, just Hiccup was enough for him. "Hiccup did." He whispered under his breath.

"He'll reject you. Just like everyone else in your life: people on the street, your parents. Even that dog hated you." Pitch couldn't help but chuckle. "It'll only be a matter of time before he realizes that you were just using him. He'll leave you and you'll be alone again."

Jack wanted so much to just scream at him. To stand up, yell in his face, and walk back to the tree house he had been living at for so long. Still, he stayed on that bench, watching his savior of sorts walk briskly through the park and into his car.

It took him a while before he started moving. At first, he just rubbed his hands and feet together to get blood flowing. Then he started walking around the park, wondering what to do next. It was noon time so Hiccup would still be in school. And there was no way he was going back 'home'; he wanted nothing to do with Pitch after all that. So, he ended up walking around the entire town, looking through stores.

His last stop for the day before picking up Hiccup was the old field. Part of it was turned into a playground and baseball field but, it didn't bother him. The city didn't touch the one place that mattered; their stargazing spot. It was far from any trees or lights, making it the perfect place to lay down and watch the universe above.

Jack laid down and looked up at the clouds, squinting his eyes. He made out shapes in his head of bunnies and fairies, of elves and candy canes. Within a few minutes, he was back in the world of the innocent where the greatest worry was what color crayon he should use. Some children from the playground a little ways away walked up and started doing the same, pointing out certain things and creating stories based on just what they saw. Jack didn't really notice them at first, but, when he did, he started joining in on the fun. Together, they ended up making a story in which an alien crashed landed on Earth and helped the children of the world fight against the evils of the dreaded 'bedtime'. The teen tried to act out some of it while laying on the grass, pretending to be the Evil Babysitter. By the end of it, all the kids were piled on top of him, laughing as they rolled around on each other. It truly was a day to remember.

Unfortunately, the watch he had just 'borrowed' from a lawyer earlier that day started to beep, signaling the end of their time together. So, Jack stood up, hugged them goodbye, and made his way to the school. It took him longer than he thought to get to the high school. By the time he got there, there was only one person in front of the building waiting for a ride home: Fishlegs.

He ran up to him, panting from running half way there. "Where's Hiccup? Did he already go home?" He asked.

"No, he went to Mr. Sanderson's office building down the street." The blonde brought his arms closer to himself, his scarf covering not only his neck but his chin, too. "Hey, where were you today? You missed a lot."

"With a friend." Jack said quickly as he started running down the street. "Thanks! See you tomorrow!"

When he made it to the office, he silently sat in the waiting room, ignoring the strange looks he got. Instead, he flipped through the old magazines they supplied and smiled as he read the best he could. The best education he had was maybe second or third grade leveled save for those few classes he had at the high school. Still, it was hard for him to read even the simplest of words.

Almost a half an hour went by before Hiccup came out, his eyes wide at his friend's presence. He quickly walked over and sat down next to him. "Where were you today?" He whispered. "Do you realize that I have been plucking gray hairs from my head all day?"

"I was meeting with a friend." Jack looked over at him and smiled. "Hey. Guessing today went okay?"

Part of the brunet was hurt but, he ignored it as best he could. He stood up with a sigh and started walking out. "Don't you act like that. You _know _I'm angry at you."

The older teen followed him, putting his hands up playfully. "Alright, alright. I won't act like that."

He smiled as he watched the other walk in front of him. It felt nice to him knowing that someone was worried about his well being. There were a few times Aster or Tooth looked for him; slapping him across the face when they found him, sometimes tears running down Tooth's face. But they were few and far between. Pitch was the main caretaker of Jack and didn't really seem to worry when he wouldn't come home some nights. There were some days where Jack just sat outside, hidden in the bushes to see if he would come looking for him like a concerned parent. Sadly, he never did.

Throughout the walk to Hiccup's house, Jack couldn't help but look down at his freckled hands. As he did, he remembered the way things used to be. How he would knock on the window almost every night and they'd sometimes hold hands as they walked to their spot in the field. And now, as he watched his childhood friend turn the corner down his street, he could feel those times slipping away. There was no way he was ever going to get them back.

When they walked up to the front steps of the house, he felt his heart plummet even further down. Every part of him went cold even if he didn't show it. He stared at the teenage girl sitting on the first two steps and knew right away who she was before Hiccup even spoke her name.

"Uh, Astrid! Nice toâ€|uhâ€|see you again."

* * *

><p>AN: And here we go. - ADAM**

Reviews = Motivation = Chapters

22. Parties

**A/N: I had a brain cramp while writing this so please excuse...well, everything but the ending. Yeah. I'm nervous. The ending was not planned out. It wasn't written in my planning book.

That was for the last few chapters. But I had to. I'll make it work.**

* * *

><p>"Uh, Astrid! Nice toâ€|uhâ€|see you again." Hiccup rubbed the back of his neck in embarrassment. Why he was so embarrassed, he couldn't say. He could just feel his cheeks burning up, though, as well as everything else. "What are you doing here so early? My dad's party doesn't start until six."<p>

The blonde shrugged and crossed her arms, her backpack leaning against her legs as she stood up. "Our dads thought it'd be nice for us to catch up and get ready for the party at the same time. So, here I am."

"Y-yeah. Here you are."

There was a long moment of silence. Hiccup stared at Astrid, looked down at his feet, then looked back up while she just simply looked at both him and Jack, wondering what was going on. "Soâ€|we going to go inside or just sit here in the cold?"

"Oh!" The brunet jumped slightly. "Yes! Yes, we should go inside. Here - no! I'll open up the door. Uh, sorry for all my dad's junk lying around. I haven't cleaned up yet, but, um, make-make yourself at home."

Cleaning and decorating for the party was more than likely the most awkward moment for Hiccup. Even with help, it took at least two hours to fully do everything: dust, wash dishes, set up the buffet. About twenty minutes in, he started becoming emotionally exhausted. For some reason, Jack kept his eyes on Astrid. At first he thought that maybe he was having a little crush on his old friend. His mind quickly changed when he noticed how many times the older teen kept bumping into the girl on purpose, pinching her arm, and tapping her upside the head. The poor boy had to keep pulling him to the side, asking him what was wrong and what his deal was. He always answered with 'I don't know what you're talking about', shrugged, and continued doing what was asked of him.

Astrid would start the slight fighting up again, though, within a matter of minutes. There were a few times where she was the one bumping into him, slapping him upside the head, and pinching his arm when he turned his head away. It truly was the most confusing thing the brunet had ever seen between two individuals. And, by the time everything was done, set, and ready, Hiccup wanted to just lay down and take a nap. He sat between the two on the couch and sighed heavily, ignoring the glances they kept giving each other. It seemed like hours had passed before Astrid decided to go into the bathroom and get ready.

Toothless took her place on the couch, placing his head on his master's lap as he listened to the conversation he had with the other teen. "So, what was all that about?"

"What was all what about?" Jack asked, finally turning on the television to drown out some of the silence.

"You know what I'm talking about." Hiccup rubbed his forehead as he

talked, yawning in between the sentence. "Pushing her, pinching her. I mean, really, Jack? That's immature and rude."

The older boy sat up and almost glared down at his friend. "_I'm_ immature and rude? Did you see how many times she slapped me up against the head?" He did have a point; she was no better than he was. But that didn't excuse his behavior. And there was no way Hiccup was going to talk to her about it.

He remembered very little of Astrid. From what his father told him, they met a year after his accident. In front of his father and other adults, she acted normally; sweet smile, giggling, and other girly type things. But, as soon as their backs turned, she would punch his arm playfully. He remembered one moment they shared clearly now, though. It was during lunch time at school and he had just dropped his pudding cup. And, like any other normal child, he walked back up to the kitchen and asked for a new one.

Snotlout wouldn't have it, though. Oh no. There was no way the useless was getting something that he would repeatedly ask for everyday. He walked right up to Hiccup and pushed him against one of the tables, taking the pudding right off his tray before pushing the rest of his food onto his brand new shirt. Of course, the lunch room was really small. Only about six or seven large round tables filled up the area so it was easy to spot the pig faced bully from across the room. Which is exactly what happened when Astrid stood up.

With her tray still containing mashed potatoes, carrots, and pizza, she ran up and slammed it in Snotlout's face. She then proceeded to stomp on his foot, kick him in the knee, and push him down to the ground. And that was just protecting another person. Hiccup didn't want to know what would happen if she was protecting herself.

"I'll talk to her about itâ€¦" It was clear he was lying through his teeth, but, Jack shrugged it off and continued watching television.

"Whateverâ€¦" He switched through the channels before glancing over at him. "Soâ€¦this party. What is it for?"

The fifteen year old shrugged. "Eh, just a get together for some of my dad's old friends." He sighed and leaned back further into the couch, petting Toothless' head as he did so. "You wouldn't think it, but, my dad has a dress code when it comes to these parties."

"What is it? Football jerseys and face paint?"

"Surprisingly, no. Tuxedos and dresses."

Jack smiled, snorting as he tried to keep in his laughter. "Am I going to see you in a dress tonight, princess?"

Hiccup rolled his eyes. "Haha, you're oh so funny. Ow, my gut. Now look at what you've done." He said in his most sarcastic tone.

Every once in a while, the two would hear Astrid in the shower singing or hear the sudden tap of her lipstick hitting the floor. There was an awkwardness between them, but, it was from another source. Knowing that there was a naked teenage woman in the next room didn't really bother them. It was, more or less, the soft growling

that came from Toothless whenever Jack got to close or the skip of Hiccup's heart when he felt his friend shift in the seat next to him. His blood rushed to his ears as he tried to zone out, keeping his mind on everything and nothing all at once.

The world came back to him when he noticed something move out of the corner of his eye. Jack had turned off the television and was standing up, sighing as he straightened his shirt. He watched him walk out of the room and through the back door without saying a word. Questions as to why he left stayed on the tip of his tongue but, something inside him told him not to speak. That he already knew why he had left. In reality, though, he had no idea.

Stoick came in through the front door with a deep sigh, mumbling things to himself as he walked into his bedroom. Gobber came through the door next, smiling as he walked into the living room.

"You an' Astrid did a nice job with the place." He nodded, looking around the room. "Doesn't look soâ€¦you know."

Hiccup nodded. "Yeah, I know."

"Annnnnnd where is she?" The older man sat down on the couch next to him, completely ready for the party.

"She's in the bathroom getting ready." He shrugged. "Taking a shower, putting on lipstick; girl stuff."

Gobber nodded. "Ah, yes. Girl stuff." He leaned back and hoped that his suit would not rip or tear. "You should be in your room getting ready, as well. Tying ties, putting on a shirt. Boy stuff."

There were times where Gobber was more of a father than his actual father. In fact, he was so good with Hiccup after the accident that, he stayed with them for a year to help with his panic attacks and nightmares. And even after that, he visited almost everyday, giving helpful advice and trying his hardest to sooth the bumpiest paths the poor child went down.

He smiled at the comment and nodded, standing up to go to his own room. Of course, Toothless wasn't that far behind, wagging his tale as he stared up at his human. He sat down on the green sheeted bed and watched the brunet paw through his closet. It didn't take very long for him to find his suit and tie and put it all on. By the time he was finished getting ready, the first official guest had already arrived and was cracking jokes with his father in the living room. He sighed and looked over at the window, expecting to see Jack standing there, ready to crawl in. But, nothing was there. It was completely dark outside. And, as he sat there waiting to let him back in, he started to get worried. Maybe he wouldn't come back until after the party. Or maybe, he went back to whatever he called home.

Hiccup looked out the window and all around, squinting his eyes to try and see better. The teen was nowhere to be seen on the ground or in the tree and the gate leading to the driveway was locked still.

'_Did he jump over the fence?_' He wondered to himself as he continued to look around, eventually sticking his head completely out the window.

After a few minutes of whispering his name and searching, he gave up and walked out of his room, joining the party. Many of the people there were hefty from either fat or muscles, making it a little hard to maneuver around everyone. Every time he turned around, an adult patted him on the back and told him how much he had grown and how they haven't seen him since he was this high. This happened more times in a month than what Hiccup would like to admit, but, he smiled, said it was nice to see them too, wow, did you lose weight, and left to go find his father.

Thankfully, for him, Stoick wasn't a hard man to find even in a crowd like this. His laugh could be heard all throughout the house whenever he heard something funny. And within a matter of minutes, the teen found him; leaning against the counter as he talked with some of his old teammates. Not wanting to interrupt anything, he decided to make a plate of food to give to Jack—if he was still in the yard, that is. So, he picked up one of the many sports themed paper plates, loaded it with hot wings, potato salad, and chips, called Toothless out to the back door, and leaned against the house in wait.

"Jack?" He whispered a little louder this time. "Jack, I brought you some food. I'll sneak you a drink from my bedroom window."

"Alright." His voice was clear, as if he was standing right next to him.

Hiccup looked all around until he heard the crunching of dead leaves behind him. He jumped and turned around, seeing Jack standing there with a huge smile. "I-I thought you left or something."

The older boy laughed and shook his head. "Nah, I was just up on the roof." He took the plate off his friend's hands, throwing a chip into his mouth. "Just keep your window open and leave the drink there. I'll be in when things calm down."

He watched as the brunet nodded and left, disappearing behind large men and women. With a sigh, he sat under the bedroom window, eating as silently as he could. This literally sucked. All of it. He wanted to go in there, dance around, eat as much as he wanted, sit next to the fire place, and keep Astrid away from Hiccup as much as possible.

Even though it was a long time ago, he still remembered it like it had only just happened. It was after a while of being part of the family did he get the chance to walk around town. At first, he stayed close to Aster like he had been asked; holding onto his shirt every once in a while, keeping within his line of vision. Until he saw him in the park just a few feet away. A white bandage swirled around his head, causing his hair to curl at its tips. He looked different, of course, the bags under his eyes were dark and he seemed to lose track of what he was doing easily. And the light that was once in his eyes was fading to nothing. He uncurled his small hands from his caretaker's shirt and ran right over, smiling like an idiot when he didn't see the hulking man the other boy called his father.

Before he could reach out to the boy, before he could hug him and kiss him on the top of the head, Jack was tackled onto the ground. All he could really see was blonde hair and the slide that stood in

front of him. He spat out the pebbles that flew into his mouth and looked up at his attacker, almost glaring at them. It was a girl no older than he was, blonde hair tied in a braid down her back. He demanded for her to explain herself which, in hindsight, was a bad idea.

She sat on top of him for the longest time, telling him that she knew who he was. That she was meant to protect Hiccup and keep him away from people like Jack. That his father put her in charge the day they met. That he needed to stay away from Hiccup or else.

But it wasn't the threat that kept him away from his best friend. It was the painful words and the questions his brain started asking him when he made his way back to Aster. Was he really that bad of a person? What exactly did he do wrong? Was it because-

SNAP!

The paper plate in his hands broke in half, bringing him back to reality. He brought a hand up to his surprisingly warm face to feel tears pouring down his cheeks. Throwing the plate and food in the trash bin, he quickly dried his face with the sleeve of his sweatshirt.

The bedroom window behind him opened and Hiccup stuck his head out. "Jack?" He whispered. "What kind of drink do you want?"

That was the last thing on his mind. It was far from what he wanted right now. He turned around with a bright red face, took a step forward, and placed his lips on the brunet's.

* * *

><p>AN: Next chapter will be about balls. - ADAM**

Reviews = Motivation = Chapters

23. Footballs

**A/N: I'm sorry this is really short. The next one will be longer. With a lot of angst. And sadness. And you'll be screaming, "Why Adam!? Why did you do this to me!?"...hopefully. **

* * *

><p>"Jack? Are you alright?"<p>

It took him a while to take in what was really happening. His friends face was nowhere near his and their lips were definitely not touching like he thought they had been a few moments ago. Time seemed to have gone back; he could have sworn that he had just finally released his urge to grab the brunet and kiss him softly.

"Iâ€|" Jack wasn't sure how to respond. He stood there for a minute just staring at the other, fixating on the green tie as he cleared his throat. "I'm alright. Uh, grape soda. Grape soda, please."

Hiccup nodded and closed the window, giving his friend enough time to slide down against the side of the house, thinking about what he had just done. Or rather, what he thought he had done. The teen placed his fingers on his lips, trying to feel for something but all he felt was chapped skin. It sent his mind spinning in many different directions. What had just happened?

He brought his knees up to his chest as he felt his heart pounding faster and faster. His hands and body began to shake as he thought of Hiccup, and he knew it wasn't from the cold. No, Jack didn't shake when it was cold out. The cold never seemed to bother him like the other kids. With a sigh, he looked up at the stars and slowly began to count them, play connect the dots with them, did anything to keep his mind off the freckled boy. But it didn't work for long. His thoughts would always swirl back to when they first went out to their field or when they first played a board game together. He even started thinking about when they first met all those years ago. That little boy all curled up in his jacket, hiding like a turtle. He had felt sorry for him. He knew what it was like to feel alone and scared, rejected by most if not all. It was times like these that he wished it was the other way around. Where he was the small boy in the jacket who was picked on and he was the one that lost his mother and he was the one who went through all that. Even though he wasn't completely sure what had happened.

His body completely jumped before the sound of the window opening reached his ears. Jack turned and smiled softly at Hiccup, taking the plastic cup from his hands. "Thanks." He muttered before looking back up at the sky.

"It's a clear night, huh?" The younger boy asked, climbing through the window to join his friend.

Jack chuckled. "Shouldn't you be helping host the party?"

"Nah." Hiccup waved the question off. "They'll never even notice I'm gone. They're all too busy in their sports talk."

They sat there for a while in silence, just enjoying each others company and the stars. It seemed like old times to the older of the two and it both broke his heart and made it flutter. Something inside told him that it was alright, that he was alright. Even so, he held his arms close to his stomach and looked down at the brunet, watching as he hugged his legs up to his chest. It gave him the appearance of a turtle crawling back into its shell. Placing a hand over his mouth to keep back the chuckle, he looked back up at the stars.

Surprisingly, the sky was clear and almost every star could be seen. It wasn't as clear as it usually was in the field, but, Jack took what he could get. He didn't know how much longer this would last and if it were to happen again. So he just sighed and hummed slightly to the tune of an old song he used to love hearing on the radio.

"You know," The brunet started, breaking the silence. "I always thought that each star was the soul of a person."

Jack nodded with a frown. He had stopped humming to show that he was listening to his friend. Even if he had heard this story once before, it was nice to hear it again. Almost like another part of his Hiccup

was returning to him. "Really?"

"Yeah." Hiccup loosened the grip on his legs as he spoke his thoughts. "When a person who has done enough good deeds dies, I believe they are sent into a sort of heaven. And we view those heavens as stars."

The white haired teen bit his lip before continuing the boy's story himself. "And they are watching down on us; guiding us, protecting us. Loving us. Right?"

"Y-yeahâ€¦did I talk about it before already?"

"Just once before. But I don't mind. I like it when you repeat stuff like that." '_It's one step closer to you coming back to meâ€¦|_'

He nodded and looked back up at the sky, tracing out patterns and shapes. It was almost like staring at clouds only it didn't hurt your eyes as much. He smiled as he saw flying arrows and dragons in the stars and it all felt so familiar. Just the thought of watching the stars, counting them, finding things in them made him feel nostalgic.

They stayed silent for at least an hour, quietly pointing out different constellations to each other. It wasn't until the noise that came from inside went down that Hiccup decided to go back and help his father clean the massive mess their guests have made. Jack nodded, smiled, and climbed up into the tree house for the night.

Unfortunately, the other didn't have the luxury of going right to bed. No, he had the pleasure of walking around in his good clothes with a trash bag in his hand, picking up dirty paper plates and cups to throw away. And that was only the kitchen. When he finally made his way to the living room, it was total chaos. He had to stop Toothless from playing with the toilet paper that hung from every spot in the room; the ceiling fan, pictures, the television. Almost everything was covered with the stuff and it made him wish he was here to stop them when it first started.

By the time everything was cleaned, he felt completely drained. He didn't even bother taking off his clothes as he curled up into his bed and fell asleep. It only felt like minutes had gone by when his alarm clock rang, warning him that it was a six o'clock. With a groan and a few muttered complaints, Hiccup turned over and slapped it until everything was silent again. He sat up and stared at himself in the mirror for the longest time, wondering if he should just go to school like this. Most of his shirt was decent and nobody would ever know. Passers by would just think that he was going to go to some meeting after school.

'_What if Snotloutâ€¦|_' The thought was enough to make him flip through the closet in search for something else.

It wasn't long until he found one of his favorite brown shirts and a pair of jeans. Straightening it out, he caught sight of something on his bed that he didn't notice before now. He stared at it through the mirror until his eyes were completely in focus.

It was the sweatshirt Jack had given him, all balled up at the corner

of the bed as if he had been playing with it. Hiccup picked it up and stared at all the rips and tears, all the little strings that poked out here and there. He had cleaned it many times before to try and get it to look a little nicer. And it did. There weren't as many stains as there once was and it didn't feel crusty when he wore it around the house here and there. He turned it over in his hands a few times and brought it up to his nose, curiosity getting the best of him.

Taking a small sniff, he was shocked. Even with as many washes as it got, it still smelt of Jack. The scent of cool peppermint and chocolate still lingered on the garment. He didn't notice how close he had the hoodie up to his face or the dumb smile that formed on his lips until he heard tapping on his bedroom window, the sign that it was time to leave for school.

Hiccup nearly dropped the sweatshirt as he jumped and ran out of his room to get his shoes on, fumbling into the sweatshirt as best he could. His father's snoring could be heard from down the hall and he felt the urge to laugh. Stoick's snoring always reminded him of a whale only not as majestic. More like a whale that was losing a fight against a shark.

Fishlegs stared at him as he walked out the front door, raising an eyebrow. "Are you alright? You look like you didn't sleep at all last night."

"I was busy most of the night cleaning the house with my dad." The brunet yawned into his sleeve. "I think I gotâ€|maybe an hour?"

Jack sighed and shook his head. "You're sleeping in class today. No objections. I'll cover for you."

"No, Jack. Really, I'm fin-"

"Hiccup. You are sleeping in class. No more discussion about it."

"B-but-!"

"So, what are your guys plans for the holidays?"

No matter how many times Hiccup tried to open his mouth and reject the idea of sleeping during school, his friend would always shush him up and talk about something else. At one point during first period, he talked almost for a complete half hour about nothing but strawberries. By second period, he had run out of things to say and would just sit there staring at him, waiting for him to put his head down and rest.

It wasn't until he yawned for the fourth time in a row that he finally laid his head down and closed his eyes. He didn't dream, of course, and the world around him seemed so far away. But Jack was right about this. He really needed to rest for a bit longer.

The bell rang sooner than expected and it caused him to jump, nearly hitting the people that sat behind him. A few kids chuckled but hardly anyone noticed his reaction. Thankfully, the teacher was far too busy with the papers in front of him to look up. Hiccup yawned and stretched his arms out before looking over at Jack who seemed to have

been staring at him this whole time. He could feel his cheeks become overly warm as he sat up and grabbed his things. Slipping his hands into his pockets, he felt a small note wrinkled up against his hands. He threw it over to his friend as he walked out into the hallway.

Jack smiled and opened up the note, laughing loudly when he read the words '**STOP WATCHING YOU CREEP**' in big bold letters. He shoved the note into his pocket and walked out after Hiccup, calling out for him as he ran his way.

Just as he was about to touch the brunet's shoulder, a football came flying by and hit the younger teen right in the head. It was a surprise it didn't knock the boy right out. He looked over at the one responsible for the attack and did all he could not to lunge at him with fists flying.

Snotlout laughed as he pointed at the downed fifteen year old, picking up his ball with the other hand. "See you at practice."

When the hall was clear of any other students, Jack helped his friend up from the floor, dusting him off. "I'm gonna kill that kid-"

"No. Don't." Hiccup looked up at him and smiled upon seeing his confused face. "I have an idea."

* * *

><p>AN: What kind of balls did you think I was talking about? Pervs. - ADAM**

Reviews = Motivation = Chapters

24. Games

A/N: I'm sorry it's been so long but I have a good reason. Something...something truly amazing has happened in my life and that was (and still sorta is) my top priority. I don't think you guys understand, it's really awesome. I'm not going to say what it is because I might embarrass a certain someone, but, just trust me on this. And no, I'm not on a sugar rush or slowly dying from lack of sleep...anyway, enjoy I guess.

* * *

><p>It was just like how it was in the movies: cheerleaders were practicing off to the side, students were studying on the bleachers, and the football team was stretching out, getting ready for the first day of practice.<p>

The equipment was all set across the field, making it seem like it wasn't practice at all but more like a boot camp. Just by looking at all the obstacles, Hiccup could feel his body begin to sweat and his heart rate increase. And what he had in mind for his bully didn't help his situation at all. In fact, it might be enough to get him kicked off the team and disappoint his father. No, that wasn't going to happen. He was going to plan this carefully. It was going to seem nothing more than an accident. A very embarrassing accident.

He looked up at Jack and watched as he sat down next to Fishlegs a little ways away from a group of studying students on the bleachers. The brunet stared and smiled at them until the coach blew his whistle, the signal that practice was about to begin.

The entire team did a set of warm ups, arm stretches, and laps around the field. The first few were easy. But, at around five laps, Hiccup couldn't really feel his legs anymore. It was almost as if he was just a flying torso. When he stopped at the beginning of one obstacle, he could finally feel his legs and the immense pain they were in. How on Earth Snotlout was able to do this with such ease was beyond him.

With a deep breath, he started running through tires, trying to keep his knees up. He had done this twice before; once in gym and once at day camp. The memory of him tire running in gym class during middle school wasn't one he wanted to remember; all the kids laughing at him as he fell flat on his face against the rubber wheels. So, he tried his hardest to remember his old day camp. He looked down and he swore he could see his pair of sandals from that year on his feet. His shirt started to turn a lime green, the same lime green they had to wear everyday. He smiled as he felt the pain disappear and he ran as fast as he could through the tires, feeling like the small child he once was even if he wasn't that old.

Next were the push ups, sit ups, and weight sleds. Hiccup watched as his target effortlessly did push ups with one arm and sit ups without breaking a sweat. He glanced over at the cheerleaders who were getting ready to do a pyramid, all of them deciding who should be on bottom and who on top. When the team stood up to push the weight sleds, that's when his idea came into full play.

The brunet took the weight sled closest to the snot faced punk and stood his ground, ready to push with all his might. The coach blew his whistle, making every team member sprint across the field like it was nothing. All except for one. Hiccup was still a ways behind everybody else, but it didn't matter. This would work, it had to.

He looked over at the cheerleaders and smiled when he saw them begin to form their pyramid. And as the head cheerleader began climbing up her cheer mates to the top, the teen swerved toward Snotlout at great speed.

'_Please workâ€|oh gods, please let this workâ€|_' He thought as he began to ram his weight sled into the other's.

The look of surprise on his face was priceless. Even though he had just seen it all happen with his own eyes, he couldn't believe it was true. He watched as Snotlout began to slide right toward the stack of girls, driving right into them and knocking them all over; if not hurting one or two. Yelps and screeches and high pitched screams echoed throughout the area and made everyone's heads turn.

The coach was clearly not pleased with this. He walked right up to the rookie and almost seemed to glare down at him. "Did you do that on purpose, Haddock?"

"No, sir. I slipped on some wet grass." Hiccup had been under the looming shadow of intimidating people all his life. This was no different and didn't seem to faze him one bit.

Coach glanced back down at him before going over to Snotlout and the girls, making sure everyone was alright. With a beat red face, Snotlout stood up and tried to fix what he had broken.

The fifteen year old looked up at his friends on the bleachers and smiled at them, giving them a wave when they shot him an approving thumbs up. On the walk home, it was all they could talk about. They all three talked about the looks on everyone's faces, the screams and shots that were made, and the color of Snotlout's face as he was slapped by almost every cheerleader in the school. It was all too much.

Jack laughed as Hiccup explained, or at least tried to, his thinking process and how he came up with such a plan. "Oh man! When you said you were going to do something, I didn't actually think you would do something like this!" He wrapped an arm around his friend's shoulders. "That was awesome!"

He couldn't really think of a response. It wasn't everyday he heard such a comment made toward him. So, all he did was stand there and smile oddly, enjoying the slight warmth coming from Jack.

As they got closer to home, the more silent they got. Fishlegs waved goodbye when it was time for them to part ways and began walking down a different street. There were times where Hiccup liked this time alone with the older teen. It was one of those 'getting to know you' times of the day they shared. And other times, he wished Fishlegs didn't leave. He would some times wish not to be left alone with him, not wanting anything to do with his flirty self. But this, this was a good day.

"So, hey." Jack said, keeping his arm around the brunet's shoulders. "I heard there was going to be a party at eight o'clock. The football team, the soccer team, everyone is going to be there."

Hiccup looked up at him questioningly. "You heard about a party where they invited all the teams and I didn't?"

"Maybe because you're new." He shrugged. "Anyway, do you wanna go crash it with me?"

He stopped in his tracks. Was he hearing this correctly? "Me? Go to a party, whaâ€" are you serious? I-I've never been to a party in my life."

"All the more reason for us to go." Jack looked over at the house, noticing Stoick's car in the driveway before turning back to the younger teen. "Wait until later on when you go to bed. I'll come and knock on your window. Until then, just act like you don't know anything about a party."

And with that, he jumped over the gate and climbed up to the tree house faster than Hiccup could give a proper response. He just left his friend there staring off into nothing, wondering what had just actually happened. It wasn't until Stoick called him into the house did he break from his thoughts. And even still, when he walked back into the house, ate dinner, showered, and went to bed, he still thought about it. The idea of a party to him was loud music, chips, soda, and screaming teenagers. But it seemed too innocent for people

like cheerleaders and soccer players. No, their idea of a party might be like how it is in the movies; loud, toilet paper everywhere, beer, drugs, sex in random bedrooms. It both scared him and made him excited.

Jack knocked on his bedroom window no more than ten minutes after he laid in bed. He could feel himself rip in half between what he was curious about and what he knew he shouldn't do. Hiccup knew that if he left right now, the chances of his father knowing about his disappearance was pretty high. But if he just stayed in bed, he wouldn't experience the high school shenanigans everyone else had gone through.

He held his breath and stared at the ceiling. Some part of this felt familiar and gave him a case of déjà vu as well as a bit of strange nostalgia. He laid there and listened to Jack's knocks, thinking over every pro and con this situation had. Go to the party, have fun. Don't go to the party, wonder all your life if you should have.

Without much thought, Hiccup stood up, slipped on a clean pair of pants and a shirt, put on his shoes, and climbed out the window. He looked up at his friend and smiled, feeling a bit proud of himself.

"Ready?" Jack asked, stuffing a lollipop in his mouth.

The brunet nodded. "This better be worth it."

"Oh, it will be." He said as they started walking down the driveway, trying to keep his voice down. "You'll remember this day for the rest of your life."

"Oh really?" His friend crossed his arms over his chest. "Well, I sure hope so."

Jack smiled. "You will, Hic. You will."

He had been planning this most, if not all, day. Around lunch time, he had heard a group of girls talk about it near the salad bar. It wasn't long until they invited him to talk about it at their table. Each one of the girls sighed and took turns saying how it was a shame he wasn't part of a team, otherwise he'd be able to go. They told him the activities that would be taking place as well as the refreshments. And as soon as spin the bottle and alcohol was mentioned, he knew he had to bring Hiccup. Even though he wouldn't ever let the boy drink such things, he had to at least try spin the bottle with him. It could bring back some memories.

The teen couldn't help but grin widely as they got closer to the house where the party took place. His logic was a bit off but, it was all he was holding onto. If he could kiss the brunet like he had imagined, like he had done in the past, maybe it would trigger something. Maybe it would flip a switch in the other's head, telling him that he knew this person, he liked this person. Maybe he'd get his Hiccup back tonight and he'd be able to stop holding back so much all the time.

His plans and hopes, though, all came crashing down when he saw a certain blonde climbing out of a car and checking her phone, making

her marry way up the steps to the booming house. The door opened and sound poured out as if a concert was being held inside.

"Astrid is here?" Hiccup asked, looking up at his friend. "Why is she here? She doesn't go to our school."

Jack bit his lip. That's rightâ€¦ "They invited team members from every school in the area." Which included the privet schools as well.

"Oh, that's right. She's on the lacrosse team at her school." He smiled and began walking up the steps, keeping behind Jack since he knew more about socializing than he did. "Are you sure about this? What if-

"Hic, relax. Trust me, this will be fun."

It sure seemed like fun when they walked in. People were walking around in their team uniforms or just their jerseys, holding plastic red cups and talking to others like they were all just the best of friends. How this kid convinced his parents of throwing a party like this astounded Hiccup. Until he saw things being tossed across rooms and the smoke in the air in some places. Then he knew that the parents were out of town and had no idea what their child was doing at home.

He just sat there on the couch for the longest time, looking from here to there, never really keeping his gaze on one specific thing. Then he heard Jack's laugh. For some reason, it hooked him in like a fish and he looked over, watching him seemingly flirt with a few of the girls. How he managed to always be this smooth, he would never know. But, it drew him in as well. When Jack smiled, he could feel his cheeks flush and his lips twist into an almost smile back. And when the white haired teen looked over at him, he swore his heart stopped. Why was he acting like this?

'_What the actualâ€¦oh..oh gods, he's coming over. Okay, Hiccup, play it cool, play it cool._' "H-hey." His voice cracked as he spoke, making him want to punch himself in the face.

"Hey." Jack held out his hand to help him up. "A game started in the other room. Why don't you come play with us."

"Ehh, I don't knowâ€¦"

"Oh, come on. It's easy. And nobody will laugh at you."

Hiccup bit his lip and thought for a moment, going over the pros and cons list before standing up without help and agreeing to the invitation. He followed the older teen into the next room, raising an eyebrow when he saw several teens sitting in a circle around a bottle. Astrid smiled and waved to him when he sat down, making him wave back.

A part of him inside began to swell as he heard the rules of the game. Unfortunately, Snotlout would spin the bottle twice, having it land on two different people. Those people must then kiss for at least ten seconds. A few of the teens objected to the rules offered to them, saying that there wasn't a time limit before. They quickly shut their mouths when they saw the brute begin to role up his

sleeves.

At first, it was actually pretty fun. At times the bottle would land on a person twice which would force them to kiss the back of their hand as if it were a person. Jack did this twice, making as much fun out of it as possible. But then the white haired boy's heart sank into his cold stomach when he saw the bottle land on Hiccup first. His heart raced as the bottle began to spin again, taking longer than any other time it spun. When it finally stopped, he felt all color drain from his body. It didn't land on him.

Astrid looked over at Hiccup. "Are you sure you want to?" She asked. "You don't have to if you don't want to."

Truthfully, he didn't want to. He wanted to say no and watch someone else take a turn. Still, his father wanted them to get together. He knew he wanted it. "No, no. I do."

And as they leaned in to press their lips together, Jack's world began spinning and he wondered if anyone put anything in his drink. He stood up and tried to hold himself against the wall, brushing off everyone's questions of 'are you alright' and 'dude, you okay'. He shook his head and began walking toward the door.

"I justâ€¦I just need some air, is allâ€¦"

* * *

><p>AN: I'm really sorry about the ending. It's midnight and I just can't. But I had to. Yeah...I think I need sleep. - ADAM**

Reviews = Motivation = Chapters

25. Hospitals

A/N: Sorry this chapter is short and late. There are two reasons to that. My main focus, lately, has been on my boyfriend, Ed. Yup. I'm not on the market anymore. I'm taken. Happily taken. I don't want to go into too much detail because I'm not one to brag. And the reason why it's so short is because I had half of it done and it was really good, Aster and Jack were supposed to fight, too! But my computer shut off and I lost all of it. I had to write this from scratch. Anyway, enjoy.

* * *

><p>It stung. Every part of his body stung but at the same time was numb. Most of it came from the freezing October rain that soaked him right to the bone. The rest of the stinging came from inside his chest, moving out to every single one of his limbs.

Jackson had been away in another city far from this one for almost a year. About a month ago, he ran away and made his way toward this small town, the town he was born and raised in. The town that was precious to him because of one single person. His Hiccup, his best friend whom he promised he'd come back to. And he was back for good this time.

He had it all planned out; he'd stay in Hiccup's tree house and would work as a paper boy. He'd come in for meals and would protest when Hiccup's mother offered to give him a bath. During high school, he'd get a bigger job and would get a house with his best friend. Then maybe start a family. It was honestly the perfect life. But earlier that day, he tried to enter the Haddock household. He sat there and knocked for ten minutes on Hiccup's window. His father came into the room and turned on the light, allowing him to see the inside a bit better.

Crayons laid in odd ways across the room, pictures were scattered on the ground. It was clear that he would come back within an hour.

_

That was one of the many things he loved and hated about his brunet friend. He was neat with his things and rarely went three days without bathing. He was very clean for a boy. Often times, he would try to persuade Jack into taking a bath or at least brush his teeth. But it was no use. Jack was a lost cause when it came to cleaning up.

Since it was a while before his best friend would come home, the child decided to take shelter in his old house. Both of his parents had moved out so, he thought that it would be completely empty and ready for him. Sadly, though, this was not the case.

As soon as he stepped onto the lawn, he noticed that it was cleaner than it ever was. He saw the house give off this sort of glow. A glow he had only seen when he was much younger. The lights were on and he could see a family getting ready for Halloween which was in just a week or so. Part of him wanted to watch them laugh, gluing things onto their group costumes. The other part of him told him to walk away. Which is what he did.

_He sat there on the swings in the pouring rain, slowly swinging his feet back and forth, not sure of what to do. In a way, he felt he was waiting for someone or something. He would look up every few minutes and expect someone to be standing there. Or maybe he expected Hiccup to drive up to the playground with his mother, telling him he was stupid and to get inside the car. But there was nothing for the longest time. Only himself and the silence. Until he heard it; a woman's scream. _

Jack turned toward the house he thought he had heard it and watched. He wasn't sure what kind of scream it was, but he had to find out.

He listened as the woman called for her child, telling them to come down and get ready to leave for the hospital. The grass and mud smushed under his feet as he stood up, acting as a cold pack for already icy toes. He listened carefully as they walked out and made their way to their car.

"What happened to Hiccup, mom? Why is he in the hospital? Why are you crying?" The child asked his mother.

He didn't properly process what he had just heard until the pair was already gone, driving down the street. Slowly, the name of his best friend and the word 'hospital' raced through his mind and made his heart stop in place.

_No. No, there was no way. Hiccup couldn't be in the hospital. He was fine, perfectly fine! But he had to see for himself. With numb legs, he began to run. He ran across streets, ignoring the horns of annoyed drivers as he focused on two words. Hiccup, hospital. The cries of the boy's mother rang through his ears once more and he began to wonder why his precious one was there to begin with. Nobody acts like that in normal situations such as breaking an arm or sticking candy up one's nose. _

_Every possible reason why the younger brunet was in the hospital crawled into his head. Maybe he was hit by a car. Or a truck. Maybe he fell off the roof of his house or cracked his head open while trying to climb down his tree. What if he was already dead and in the morgue, cold and alone? _

Jack's body began to shake as he saw the hospital over the horizon. He could just picture Hiccup's lifeless body already; blue lips, pale skin, glazed eyes. It was horrifying and it scared him out of his wits.

The child burst through the doors and ran up to the front desk, demanding his best friend's room number. People who were visiting or just coming in stared at the boy, watching rain drip from his dirty clothes and his face become pale with the news of where Hiccup was. Like lightning, he ran from the desk and to the staircase, skipping stairs as he flew up floors. It didn't take him long to get to the Intensive Care Unit and when he did, he nearly pushed doctors and nurses to the ground as he ran. Only when he reached the room did he stop. He stared with wide eyes bigger than dinner plates.

_There Hiccup was on the bed. The number of machines hooked up to the now seven year old was astounding. Bandages wrapped themselves around his head, a large gauze sticking out at the side with red specks. He was pale, very pale. And when Jack reached out to hold the brunet's hand, he was afraid that he would break under his touch. There had never been anything as fragile as this boy. And he started to shake as he cried, sitting down next to the hospital bed. _

_A hand on his shoulder made him jump and completely sob out loud. He didn't know what else to do. He felt utterly hopeless. _

_"Um, excuse me?" The nurse that held his shoulder asked, now rubbing his back. "You need to wear this. He's unstable and you could make him sick." _

_She handed Jack a simple hospital mask and watched as he slipped it on, fixing it so it fit his face. He nodded, looking up at her as he wiped away his tears. "T-thank you" _

_The nurse smiled and nodded, whispered a 'you're welcome', and left the room. It was hard to breath with the mask on but he didn't mind. It was to keep Hiccup safe. And right now, this is all he could do to help his best friend. _

_He just sat there and stared at the brunet in front of him. Every once in a while, he'd hold his hand, rubbing his thumb across it softly. He felt so fragile. Had he always been like this? Or did Jack just notice now how small he actually was? Before, it seemed much different. Hiccup had fallen many times into the snow or had run into

a tree. He would simply rub the spot that hurt and get back up as if nothing hurt him._

_"Please get back upâ€|" Jack whispered. _

Hiccup didn't reply.

"Please, Hic. Get up and smileâ€|" Jack silently sobbed.

Hiccup didn't reply.

There was a moment of quiet weeping before the older of the two spoke again. "I promise, Hic. I promise you'll be okay. And I promise I'll be here for you."

* * *

><p>His head never felt worse. Even that one time Aster gave him alcohol wasn't as bad as this. If anything, he felt like he had been shot in the head.<p>

Jack sat up on a rather clean smelling and looking couch. He looked around and took notice of little things; the black and white photographs, the chandelier made of colored glass bottles, the white furniture that made the rest of the room look like something straight from a store or a catalogue.

"Bunny?" The teen grumbled as he stretched and stood up. "You there?"

"No, he's not home yet." He heard Tooth say from the kitchen. "Are you hungry, Jack? Do you want a sandwich or something?"

Jack shook his head. "No, but thanks." He took another moment to look around, trying his hardest to piece together why he was here in the first place. "Hey Tooth?"

"Yeah?"

"What am I doing at Bunny's?"

"We found you passed out on the swings. We couldn't just leave you there." She came out into the living room and handed him a glass of lemonade, sitting down across from him. "Why were you in the park anyway?"

The white haired boy shrugged, taking a sip of his drink. "I needed some fresh air. Get my mind off things."

Tooth nodded and stared Jack for a moment, holding her own glass of lemonade in her hands firmly. She was silent for a while, thinking how he would react if she said anything. "Did something happen with that Hiccup boy?"

He was tempted to say yes. He was tempted to curl up into a ball and cry, telling her everything that happened. How he would never remember him, how he would never return his love, and how he would go on living and loving life with another. Jack would do anything to make sure Hiccup was happy, but, it still hurt knowing that he wasn't the one making him happy.

Instead of showing and telling her all this, he just stared into his glass and watched the lemon swirl around with the ice in his drink. He stayed silent for a while and when he finally opened his mouth to answer, the front door opened and Aster stepped in, carrying a shopping bag.

"Got ya some things." The Australian mumbled as he kicked off his shoes. "It's gettin' cold. Need ta wear these, Frostbite."

Jack shook his head and leaned back into the couch, sipping his drink lightly. "I'm fine, thanks."

"To bad, yer wearin' them." Aster threw the bag onto the couch and walked into the kitchen, almost completely ignoring Tooth.

The teen peeked inside the bag seeing a proper jacket, new pants, shoes, and socks. He raised an eyebrow as he took out a few of the things, looking them over. Why in the world would the man go get these things for him? Didn't he know he was perfectly fine the way he was? But, seeing these things, it made him a bit happy. It still made him wonder, though, and he walked into the kitchen.

Jack watched from the doorway as his oldest friend looked through his cupboards, grabbing a bottle of wine and sitting down. He had seen him drink a few times and heard many stories about him getting so drunk, he ended up making out with everything at the tavern. Jack slightly prepared himself as he watched Aster take a few sips of wine, not even noticing the young one watching.

"Why are you doing this all of a sudden?" He asked, sitting at the kitchen table across from him. "New clothes, bringing me to your place instead of over with Pitchâ€¦what are you up to, Bunny?"

With a hiccup, Aster looked over at him, his face more serious than ever before. "You remind me of myself when I was yer age. I jus' want ya to have a good life. Startin' today."

"But why?"

He sighed. "Jacksonâ€¦there are some things you should know 'bout me. Things I wanna tell ya so you don't end up like this."

* * *

><p>AN: Next chapter will be a Bunnymund chapter. But it will be important in a sense. - ADAM**

Reviews = Motivation = Chapters

26. Fights

A/N: Gah...so sick...headaches...earaches...stomachaches...nose all stuffed up...that's it, I'm dying.

* * *

><p>Tooth sat down at the table with the two, interested in what Aster had to say. He would mention his family every now and then but

it wasn't very often and he never really had much to say about them. All she knew was that he had brothers, sisters, and parents. It was very different from her own past life and she always wondered what it would be like to have a brother or sister.<p>

"I was born into a rich family." Aster started, his eyes fixated on his bottle of wine. "I had three brothers and four sisters. I was the youngest so ya can only imagine the way I was treated."

The Australian took a sip of his alcohol and sighed, leaning back into his chair. "Pampered, yeah, but I was very alone."

"Still, you were pampered." Jack muttered, shoving his hands into his sweatshirt pocket. His comment earned him a soft kick to the leg from Tooth who glared at him from where she sat.

Even though Pitch was the official guardian of Jack, Tooth tried to be a good mother figure toward him. She always cared for him when he was sick and treated him when he was good. Slapped his hand when he said something he shouldn't have and watched out for him when he was with the other members of their 'family'. It had come naturally to her and even though he was eighteen now, she still couldn't stop the motherly thoughts and actions.

Aster stared at the two for a moment, watching Tooth give a soft smile to him and Jack let out a quiet groan of pain. He knew exactly what had happened and didn't continue until his friend gave him the word to go on.

"My brothers all became football stars and my sisters went into acting. I didn't want to do that." The older man sipped his wine once more. "Wanted to do something special. Wanted to help people rather than help myself. So, went to school to become a doctor."

Jack smiled slightly. "You know football players? Have they been to the Super Bowl?" He shifted in his seat, just barely hanging off the edge.

"Not that football. You call it 'soccer'." Aster smirked. He knew the teen wasn't that much into sports. The only things Jack liked about sports was the parties, getting dressed up, the cookouts, and screaming as loud as you can with a reason to.

The boy scuffed and leaned back in his seat. "That's right, you guys are weird."

"Jackson!" Tooth whispered, getting ready to kick him in the shin again. She was only stopped when her oldest friend waved her down, sitting up in his seat.

"Tooth, could ya please order us somethin' to eat? Chinese maybe." Aster asked. "I'll wait to finish the story when you're done."

With a sigh, she nodded and stood up, walking into the living room to grab the phone and call them some late night dinner. While she did, the two kept their eyes on each other. Jack seemed to look like he was trying to figure the man out. He didn't seem to understand what was going on or why he was telling him this.

The older of the two had a distant look in his eyes and he knew he

had one. All he seemed to do was stare at the teen in front of him and listen to his friend in the other room, her voice very pleasant like how she sounded when she was at work. Her voice was a weakness of his but he'd never admit it. He'd rather stay in the background, listening to her voice change into many ranges; squeaking at some points and dropping in others.

Silence hung in the air as Tooth hung up the phone and waited in the chair by the door. She smiled slightly as she placed her hands flat on the chair cushion, measuring herself. To her delight, her hips were a hands width away from the sides of the chair. At one point in her life, they were a hand and a half away, but that was a long time ago.

It seemed like time slowed down and stretched out as they waited. Jack started to feel a little crazy and he swore that that tick came a few tocks too late. His foot started to tap and he began scratching at the side of his head, the memories from that party coming to his mind. He didn't want to think about that right now. That was the last thing he wanted to come to mind. He wanted someone to start talking, to say something; anything to get his mind away from what he was currently thinking.

Thankfully, the doorbell rang, making everyone jump from the sudden noise. Tooth got up from her place in the living room, paid the delivery man, and walked into the kitchen with at least two large bags of food.

Aster cleared his throat as she began taking everything out, handing plates to both boys. "I studied back home for four years before comin' here to America." He started, clearly getting the attention of the other two. "By that time, I was twenty-two. An' I was alone."

"Pffttâ€|alone? Seriously?" Jack asked, digging his fork into his white rice and stuffing it into his mouth, a few grains still left on the sides of his cheeks. "I thought you told me you were in the family longer than any of us."

"Longer than you. Longer than Tooth." He nodded, glancing over at his friend, watching her stare down at her plate almost with fear. "When we were invited to join the family, we were all alone. We all had real families that didn' want us. After a while of being friends, we both joined the family."

Aster turned his attention to Jack, his gaze becoming even more serious than it had before. "We weren' as lucky as you, Jackson. We weren' kids, we were adults. So we had ta show we'd do anythin' for our new familyâ€|"

* * *

><p>Pitch's breath felt icy cold against the back of his neck as he talked, the air that surrounded his 'elder' was even more so, making him remember all those nights as a child crying about the bogeyman who lived under the bed.

_"That right there, Aster, is your first mission." The black haired man pointed to a small corner store, a mother and her child walking in as they sang a small song. "I want you to take all the money from

that store and get rid of any witnesses. Destroy cameras that may have seen your face." _

_The newly joined family member turned to him in horror after hearing the bell ring, indicating that the mother and child had walked inside. "But they are about to close. That mother and child—what if they see?" _

_"Then they will have to be taken care of." Pitch's smile was worse than the sick look in his eyes. "You wouldn't want to end up like Sanderson, would you?" _

_Aster shook his head quickly. Sanderson, or Sandy as everyone but Pitch and Red called him, was a short blonde man who had moved into the United States like most of the family members. He loved to laugh and talk about stories of when he and his best friend, North, were children. They usually made the others laugh as well. But, when Pitch approached him and told him his mission to show his loyalty to the gang, he refused. As punishment, he ordered Tooth to show her loyalty and silence him forever. She ended up stabbing his throat, ending his fun stories forever. _

_He had no idea what was in store for him if he refused. If he didn't do this, Pitch could very well torture both him and Tooth in front of each other. As the image of a bloodstained woman started creeping into his mind, he shook his head and quickly walked inside. He watched the mother and child closely. A few times, he even tried to approach them and tell them to leave, that the store was closing now, but the mother just grabbed her child by the wrist and dragged him off into another aisle. _

_When they had finally reached the cashier, Aster became worried. He walked over and watched them, tapping his foot as he glanced at his watch. As he began to dig through his bag, looking for the mask he had made himself for this very event, he looked up and saw the small boy staring at him with wide green eyes. He had to do this now. Maybe they would leave and not be able to see. _

_Just as the pair reached the doors, the man tied his mask onto his face and pulled out the gun he had in one of the bag's side pockets. He began shouting, ordering the young cashier to throw all the money she had into the bag in his hands. She did as she was told but with no reward. With closed eyes, Aster pointed the gun to her head and pulled the trigger, doing the same to the cameras that hung above the doors as he walked out. _

_Pitch stood there, his arms crossed. Even with all the work he had done, the blood on his hands, it didn't seem to be enough for the dark leader of their 'family'. "Two got away." _

_"But he's just a child! I'm not gonna—" _

_"You'd rather save that child than risk putting your family in danger?" He shook his head in disappointment. "Tsk, tsk, tsk—I thought you were better than this, my bunny." _

_All the other man had to do was slip his hand into his pocket. God only knows what he had in there; a cell phone, a gun, a bomb. It could be anything. And whatever was in Pitch's pocket was the last thing Aster wanted to know. It brought enough fear into his heart to

help his legs start moving. _

He ran down the street, not minding the rain at all. By this time, he was used to all this rain. His eyes searched every side of the side walks, every fence they could have climbed over. Then he heard it; the child talking to his mother with worry. He couldn't make out what he was saying, but it didn't really matter.

_Then the mother spoke, her voice getting louder as they ran. Aster turned to see the two running down a small alleyway. "Don't stop running!" _

Adrenaline filled his body and without thinking, he pulled the gun up to her head, swiftly pulling the trigger before pulling it again, pointing the tip at her torso.

Bang!

Bang!

_The noise echoed but nobody seemed to hear it. Lemon drops filled the air and landed, seeming to copy the rain that followed. _

Aster watched as the little boy walked up to his mother, his voice shaking as he spoke. It was clear he had never seen such hate and violence before. "M-Momâ€|?"

Slowly, the man turned to see Pitch watching, leaning against one of the buildings. Aster shook his head while his elder nodded slowly, looking down at the boy as he began to plead, beg for his mother to get up. He didn't like this game anymore he kept saying. Get up mom he kept begging. 'I don't like this game anymore either, kidâ€|' Aster thought to himself and began walking up to him, cocking his gun.

_The reaction the child had to the sound was uncanny, almost as if he knew it was coming. The two just stared at each other and the Australian frowned, wanting to just sit there and count the brunet child's freckles to pass the time. _

"I'm sorry, kid."

* * *

><p>Jack stared with wide eyes full of horror as he heard the story. It all started to make sense to him now; the way his oldest friend had been acting lately wasn't just because of him being tired of his dirty deeds. It was because of who he had been trying to save.<p>

"Those green eyes are somethin' I'll never forget."

Freckles, green eyes, brown hair, and the scar shown through the locks flashed before the teen's mind and rage began to build in his heart. It was only a second for him to see nothing but red as he flung himself across the table, his hands around the man's throat.

He wanted to kill him. How dare he? How dare he try to kill his best friend? How dare he try to kill this boy in which he had loved for so

long? He deserved to die. To crawl into a hole and rot for millions of years. Jack's hands tightened and his feet began pressing down on the man's chest. He didn't care that the other was clawing at him, digging into his skin, trying to gasp for air. Not a single sound came to his ears and when Tooth started pulling him away, all he could do was yell.

"Jack! Jack! Calm down!" Tooth screamed back, trying to keep him from killing Aster.

"Calm down? Calm down?!" Jack glared at the man who had hurt his friend, his only friend back then. "He tried to kill him! Do you have any idea what you did?! You traumatized him! You traumatized him so much, he needs to see a therapist! He needs to keep a journal to remind him of what he has done the past week! He forgets about everything! He forgot about me and it's all your fault!"

The teen could feel tears coming to his eyes as Aster started his rant as well, his voice not as strong as the others. "I had no choice! It was either my life or his!"

"You should have died! He was only a child!" Jack pulled away from Tooth enough to kick the man in the chest, sending him flying into the wall. "You monster! You should be dead!"

"Enough!" Tooth screeched, making the whole room silent for one moment. The only sound came from the two trying to catch their breath. "Thereâ€¦" She whispered. "Fuckâ€¦"

All Jack could do was stare at Aster and shake his head. "Why are you telling me all this? Why didn't you tell me before when you knew who Hiccup wasâ€¦?"

"Because now, Pitch is havin' Onyx follow ya." The gray haired man coughed, rubbing his reddened throat. "If he finds out that Hiccup was that lil' boyâ€¦he'll kill him. And all of us with him."

* * *

><p>AN: It was pretty damn obvious. Anyway, on to crawling into bed and dying some more. - ADAM**

Reviews = Motivation = Chapters

27. Strangers

**A/N: Sorry for such the long wait! I've been needed a lot more around the house than usual. My mother has more hours at her job and I have to take care of both my brother and my father. In fact, after I post this, I need to go make or pick up dinner depending on what everybody wants. I'll try to write more often, guys, I'm sorry. Anyway, here's the chapter. **

* * *

><p>He felt absolutely guilty. And the thing is, in his mind and in the minds of those around him, he did nothing wrong. It was a simple little kiss. What was the harm in that? It wasn't like he and Astrid went at it full force. So, why did Jack leave? Was he sick? He didn't

look all that pale that day and he seemed fine up until that moment. And it was just a game, a harmless game. And those were the rules; kiss whoever the bottle lands on. Soâ€|why did he feel soâ€|bad? Why was he feeling like he just stabbed a knife into Jack's chest when it happened?<p>

Hiccup shook his head at the thought of his friend running off. '_He's fineâ€|_' He thought to himself. '_He's always fine. Maybe he just went to see a friend and spend the nightâ€|Yeah. Yeah, that's it. He'll turn up like always._'

A knock at the front door made his heart race and he could feel the apologetic smile crossing his lips as he pulled it open. It quickly changed when he saw Fishlegs standing in Jack's pace. He still smiled, it was just a friendly smile instead.

The whole walk to school was tense. Every bush they passed, every turn they made, the brunet thought that the oldest teen was going to jump out and scare them. He would, too. It was in his playful nature to act such a way. Hiccup just wished he'd do it soon because the closer they got to the school, the more he realized Jack wasn't going to pop out and the more he realized that, the more his heart sank. What did he do wrong?

The teacher, the students, even the bells were nothing but muffled sounds in his ears. He would stare out the window to see if Jack was in a fight or if he was just running into the school. During lunch, he sat there and practically ignored Fishlegs, keeping his eyes at the lunch line and the lunch hall doors. His pen tapped and his lip was bleeding with the amount of times he bit it in worry. Even his leg began bouncing by the end of each period. Snotlout tried his hardest to just pull the fifteen year old out of his daydreams but it was no use. He was completely focused on one thing and nothing could seem to change that.

The whole school day seemed to take longer than usual. Every few hours, he would take a glance at the clock or at the sky. For some odd reason, he always pictured the white haired teen flying. He could just see it now; Jack flipping through the air on a snowboard, laughing as he skid across clouds and shined in the sunlight. Even if moonlight did suite him best. Wait. What? Why would he think that?

And then he thought back to the festival where they were there on the ferries wheel. How stunning he actually looked against the moonlight. How it shined off his white locks and bounced off his eyes like diamonds. Hiccup could feel his cheeks flush but he didn't seem to care. He just laid his head down and stared out the window, watching for his friend.

When school let out, Hiccup sat there on the front steps and watched as everybody waited for friends in the parking lot or in the court yard. Seniors drove off with a roar of excitement that there were no more classes until tomorrow and freshmen walked away giggling about the boys or girls they had met that day. And as he sat there on the top of the steps, he searched for any sign of Jack. He searched for a car, listened for a laugh, even sniffed the air for that peppermint and earth scent that the other always carried off him.

An hour he waited. The teachers asked him if he needed a ride home

but he declined. Teens that were in detention walked out. Snotlout, being one of them, rammed his bag into the back of the brunet's head, telling him that he couldn't wait for tomorrow. He didn't even bother to roll his eyes at him as he stood up and began walking to Mr. Sanderson's building.

Hiccup glanced up at the wind chimes that hung off the gutter of the building when he approached. They clanked together in harmony and it usually brought a smile to his face but now, there was nothing. He was worried more than anything and it showed as he sat there in the waiting room by himself, holding his backpack to his chest. Jack was nowhere to be seen, nobody had heard of him for an entire day. Hiccup began to worry that he had really hurt his friend by kissing Astrid. If one would call it a kiss. It was more of a peck on the lips, like a chicken pecking at the ground. It was simple, no strings attached. In fact he felt nothing. There was no taste to her like there was with Jack. There was no feeling of wanting more like there was with him that one night up on the ferries wheel. And it wasn't even that much of a kiss wait. Yes yes, there was that feeling that night. There was fear, but there was also longing, wasn't there?

His name was called and he sat up, giving a quick wave to the secretary before walking inside of the main office. Mr. Sanderson smiled at him until he saw down in the chair, holding his backpack like a child would hold a stuffed animal. He kept his eyes to the ground and stayed silent for almost ten minutes.

"Is it really that wrong?" Hiccup whispered. "To kiss someone, I mean." He added quickly and looked up at his therapist. "Is that wrong?"

Sandy shrugged, pulling out the boy's file with a pen and began writing. He knew it was going to be one of those visits; a visit where the patient will just talk and talk without really wanting an answer. And he didn't need to give any. Usually, during one of these visits, the patient will figure out the problem on their own. Sandy liked these kinds of visits. It made life a bit less stressful.

"Because, I don't find it to be that wrong. So why did he just get up and walk away?" The brunet rubbed the side of his head. "Did it really hurt him? I mean it couldn't have. No. Just no. There is no way."

He stood up, pushing his backpack into the seat he was just in. The teen began to pace around the carpeted room. "He's a boy, I'm a boy, so there must be no attraction between us." Hiccup said, moving his arms around as he spoke and thought all at once.

"I mean, that brush of our lips was nothing. It meant nothing. It couldn't have meant anything. Liking him is not an option." He spoke so fast, it could have all been one word. "But but I still taste him."

Sandy looked up from his papers, watching the brunet stare at the wall, stuttering before he turned to him. "How how is that possible? I don't understand it. An-and I still want to taste more of him but that's just stupid, right?"

The man shrugged and went back to his notes. This would have been so much easier with a audio recorder. True, him talking to himself was easy enough but with the way he was talking...it was a miracle he understood any of it.

"Then today that idiot decides not to even show his face." Hiccup rolled his eyes, glancing out the window as he did. "I mean, how could a spin the bottle kiss have hurt him? It meant nothing! It was just a game! Orâ€¦does he even know that game?" He asked as he turned back to Sandy. "Does he even know it's a game? Maybe he's never seen or heard of games like that. Li-like truth or dare! He might not even know that one!"

Mr. Sanderson shrugged and continued writing. Based on the clothes Jack had on the last time he saw the teen, he was in poor care for a long time. Longer than he had seen most kids. The possibility of him not knowing any popular party games was relatively high.

Hiccup continued to pace across the room, babbling on about how much of an idiot the older boy was and how he was going to be in so much trouble when he got a hold of him. How he was going to slap him across the face for scaring him and how he was going to hug him as tightly as he could. He then began to trip over his words once more, saying that that kind of thing was unacceptable. That something like that would never happen. Or would it? Confusion overcame his face as he leaned back into his chair once more. Did he really want to hug him? No, no of course not! Butâ€¦but he still wondered. The poor brunet groaned and rubbed the sides of his head.

"I hate thisâ€¦" Hiccup grumbled. "What's wrong with me? Why do I feel this way?" He looked up at his therapist, eyes dropped. "Can you fix it?"

Sandy shook his head with a smile; a wrong answer to the hurting teen in front of him. "Then what was the purpose of coming?" Hiccup said, standing up and leaving the office calmly.

He passed the secretary without waving or even glancing at her, quickly sitting down in the waiting room. Plopping down with a sigh, he didn't even notice the man sitting next to him until he heard the page of one of the old magazines turn.

The man beside him was a fair looking young twenty something with champagne blonde hair and blue eyes like stars. His face was round and the light freckles he had reminded Hiccup of craters on the moon. He sat there and stared at this mysterious man. Never before had he seen him in Mr. Sanderson's building before. Everybody that came here looked like they had either lost all hope at life or looked overly happy to be alive. This man looked neither. He looked calm and professional, like he was there for business, not venting talk.

The man's blue eyes flickered as they turned to fix on the brunet who jumped slightly and turned away, embarrassed. He smiled at the teen's slight blush. "It's alright. A lot of people look at me."

"I'm sorry, I didn't mean toâ€¦I just-I didn't notice you." Hiccup stumbled.

With a light hearted chuckle, the man looked back down at his magazine. "Well, I'm noticed now." It was strange. He didn't seem

offended by anything. In fact, the chuckle made the younger a little lighter than he was before.

"Yeahâ€¦|sorry about that." He whispered with a nod.

"Oh, it's alright. It happens more often than you'd think." The man closed the guide to celebrity's private lives and looked down at the boy all the way. "You look troubled."

Hiccup nodded, hugging his backpack to his chest. "Yeah, just a bit."

"And did Mr. Sanderson help you?"

He shook his head. "Not as much as I hoped."

The man turned to look at him completely. "Oh?"

A nod. "Well, it doesn't help when all he did was write in my file. He didn't look up very much, he didn't tap his pen at all, he didn't stop me rambling."

"Ahh. It sounds like you're going through a very difficult time at the moment."

"I am." Hiccup looked up at him. "I'm justâ€¦|I'm so confused. I think I hurt someone close to me and now I'm worried that they won't come back to me. And I'm worried that when they do, I'll feelâ€¦|differently toward them. And it's just-I just can'tâ€¦|It's too much."

The man placed the magazine down with the others and smiled down at him, beaming like a nightlight in a child's room. "Maybe it's not as much as you think." He said calmly. "Maybe this 'differently' is a good thing."

"I'm not so sureâ€¦|" The boy shifted in his seat, holding his bag closer to his chest. "What if I mess this up? Then I'd only have one friend left."

"You'll never know until you try."

"Huh?" Hiccup looked up at the smiling man.

"Maybe, you'll lose this person as a friend but gain them as something else. Sometimes that's a good thing and other times it's not. All you can do is hope that this person stays with you."

They both sat there for a while before the brunet looked up at the other, his voice just a whisper as if he was afraid to ask. "Who are you?"

"I have many names and titles. But my friends, well, they call me Manny."

"Mannyâ€¦|" Hiccup nodded and stood up. "Thank you, Mr. Mannyâ€¦|for helping me."

Before he left, he gave the man a small smile and a slight nod. This 'Manny' didn't do very much at all, didn't say much of anything. The

words he used weren't very deep at all, either. And on his way home, the fifteen year old wondered how this stranger was able to clam him down with a few simple words.

His father didn't say anything to him other than he had the night shift and dinner was on the table. Hiccup just nodded and walked into the kitchen, quietly eating his dinner. Slowly, his eyes began to fixate on the old tree house that had once been Jack's awkward home. If he was here, the two would be eating and the oldest would be laughing, making jokes as the youngest rolled his eyes with a smile. It wouldn't feel as lonely if his friend was here.

Dinner was finished and the dishes were clean. The house was silent save for the noises that came in through the brunet's bedroom window. He thought that maybe if he kept it open, the chance of Jack coming back would be higher. Even if he did come back, Toothless might scare him away. The black lab laid on the floor and stared out the window, giving out a sigh every few minutes.

The soft, torn fabric of Jack's sweatshirt rubbed against Hiccup's arms, making him hug it even tighter. He ignored the stains, the rips, and the hanging threads, only quietly taking in his scent. Never had he thought he could miss and worry about someone this much.

As his eyelids began to drupe down, he gave out one small prayer, whispering just under his breath. "Please let him be alrightâ€¦"

* * *

><p>AN: Sorry it's so short. I'll try to make it longer next time. - ADAM**

Reviews = Motivation = Chapters

28. Worthless

A/N: Hey guys! Sorry it's taking so long and I'm sorry it isn't as long as I promised. I'm at my grandparent's now for a week or maybe less. So, I've been doing a lot of drawing(which you can see on my tumblr located on my profile) and a lot of writing. I'll be posting more chapters and possibly more stories. There is one I've been wanting to do for a while and I **_really_****hope people don't hate me for it...It'll be posted tomorrow hopefully, so yeah. Enjoy!**

* * *

><p>Everything had went about normally. Well, as normally as things used to be: Jack walked around town with his hood up, hiding his feet and hands as he went in and out of stores. He would shift in this still rather new sweatshirt of his as he waited for cross light signals or when he was just browsing through the isles. The teen picked up the few things they needed and the many things he wanted, storing them in the backpack he had. Lollipops bounced in his hoodie pocket and the one he sucked on slowly became smaller and smaller. By the time it was just a stick, he frowned at the street he was on.<p>

The festival that him and Hiccup went to was packing up, the ferries wheel almost completely down. This sight saddened him the most. Even the commanding yet funny voice of the crosswalk button didn't cheer him up. No, Jack only pressed it once, frowning even more when the 'wait' command screamed out.

With Onyx watching his every move, he didn't even dare to go near the school. He could feel her eyes on him like a hawk on a mouse. So, he went about his day as he would have if Hiccup had not been in the picture at all. Any more attention to him would have caused Pitch to want a full background search on the brunet. Which would mean school records, family records, and medical records. If Onyx, Red, or Pitch got their hands on any of those, Hiccup would be skipping into a grave that Jack had dug up for him. It was best if he didn't see him ever.

The light flashed and him as well as a few other people began walking across the street, not even paying the torn down festival any mind. Most of them were on their phones anyway; dresses and suits and dies and suitcases flashed by him and he looked down at himself. Those people had something to their name, something about them that was full of worth. The only things Jack had to his name was an old hospital mask, a dirty sweatshirt, and very torn pants that he tied to his legs so they wouldn't flop around. It was no wonder people paid him about as much mind as they did the folded up booths and broken down rides. He was of no worth.

Jack spat the stick away in a trash can, popping in another lollipop in thought of it all. He didn't care where he was going, at the moment, he was just so lost in thought. Every stupid thing he ever did crossed his mind as well as all the embarrassing moments in his life. Everything that could make him blush, hide his face, and melt to the ground in shame flooded his entire body until the only thing he could do was run into an alley and sigh. He leaned against one of the walls and looked around to make sure he was alone before curling up on the dirty ground.

His heart was pounding against his chest and his breathing became heavier, quickening. It seemed like the whole world could hear and see his thoughts, like every single person was in that alley with him, pointing and laughing. But, at the same time, they were all in there, their backs turned to him. He was ignored and laughed about to those who did dare acknowledge him. The world began spinning as he stood up again and swallowed back his tears. After a few minutes of standing there, letting the cold, wet slop on the ground slip into his toes, he breathed a command.

"Move."

Nobody else had heard it, not even himself. But it was enough to get his legs moving. His feet sloshed against the alleyway ground as he slid one in front of the other. He truthfully didn't know where he was going, yet he knew he had to keep walking.

People turned their heads and children stared in wonder as he walked out of the alleyway, the bags under his eyes shining from the shadows his hood gave off. Little boys asked who he fought and why he got punched while little girls asked how tired he was. Of course, he didn't answer like he usually did. No, he just kept walking. His mind was empty and his face was twisted, his fist curled up against his

chest. It felt like the world was on his shoulders and a ton of bricks was crushing him from the inside.

At times, he leaned against a wall and slumped down, curling up against the brick or concrete. He could feel the tears just begging to fall down his cheeks. With a hard swallow, he whispered the same command and stood up, walking once more.

The streets became less crowded the longer he walked. Everything began twisting in his head until he saw familiar landmarks, familiar street signs. And a familiar door that might or might not open if he were to knock on it. But he had to try, didn't he? He had to knock and see if anyone were to open up.

His hand trembled as he tapped the door with his knuckles, his knees shaking. Most, if not all of him wished that nobody was home. That nobody would open the door and he could just continue walking until he passed out somewhere. It wasn't like this had happened before. It wasn't like he never questioned his worth. Because he did. He almost always questioned if he was worthy or not. He would never say anything about it, though, keeping it bottled up. He always thought he could handle itâ€|

The door opened and Jack couldn't help the tears that flowed when he saw Aster standing there, eyes wide at the sight. "Jack?"

"I'm worthless, Bunny." The teen sniffled. "I'm so worthless."

Poking his head out to look around, the man quickly gestured and helped the other into the house. He closed and locked the door, going to each window to draw the curtains. The lights flickered on and they both sat across from each other in the living room. "Jack, what makes ya think you're useless?"

"Well, that's what I am, right?" Jack coughed out. "The only use I have is stealing. And even then, it's not like how you can steal! You can steal televisions and radios and game stations!" He stood up, pointing to each item as he shouted its name. "I'm a teen! They keep a close eye on me! So, reallyâ€|I have no use."

The teen slumped back into his chair, tears silently falling down his face as he thought about those days he came back to Pitch without any money or something of value. "I'm just a worthless teenagerâ€|no real future, no escape. This is what I am."

Aster sat there staring at the boy. He played with the arms of his chair, plucking fuzzies off the fabric as he thought it all over. Never had he ever heard the other say something like this. Every once in a while, he'd hear how much Jack wanted to be a normal kid like everyone else. Sometimes, he'd even say that it'd be cool to hang out with someone his age for once. But something like this? Having a melt down was something Jack was not known for even thinking of. Then the man got to thinkingâ€|

This boy, thisâ€|child, had never really had much of a life to begin with. His parents argued about every little thing, his mother neglected him, his father abandoned him, and Pitch practically kidnapped him. Aster could still hear sometimes the cries and begs for his mother, for his father, for Hiccup to come and save him in

his ears. He remembers almost everyday sitting by Jack's side, rubbing his back as he tried to sooth the then seven year old to sleep. It took hours, sometimes all night to get him to calm down and shut his eyes. He could only imagine the other things he must have bottled up inside and hidden behind his hospital mask.

"Jackson, there is more to ya than just this." The Australian tried to explain, trying to cheer him up.

Jack looked up at him, the bags under his eyes shinning again against the lights. "Oh really? Like what?" He almost spat.

"Well, for one thing, you're amazin' at math." Aster leaned forward in his chair. "Ya could always be a math teacher. Or just a school teacher period. You're amazin' with kids, too."

"And how is thatâ€¦" He sniffled, wiping his eyes. "â€¦supposed to help me?"

"Because Jack, ya aren't useless. Ya aren't worthless. You're just blind."

"Blind?"

He nodded with a smile. "You're blind to all the good things about ya. You don't see your worth like others do. You aren't worthless, you're just blind. Hopefully, you'll see your worth before it's too late."

The only noise between them came from Jack's choked sobs and sniffles. After a few minutes of him trying to calm himself down, Aster finally walked over and pulled the white haired boy into a soft embrace, trying his hardest to hush him like a father would to a weeping infant. Jack wrapped his arms around him and sobbed into his chest, coughing when he was done.

"You deserve so much better, snowflake." Aster whispered. "Ya deserve to be happy. To live a normal life."

The teen looked up at him, his eyes puffy and red, hair sticking to his cheeks. "Can I still have that, Bunny?" His question didn't sound much like one as it did a plea.

"If ya want. The only one that can change your life is you."

Jack opened his mouth to argue but stopped. Instead, he stared at the other, thinking the whole thing over. It couldn't be true. Other people have always changed his life. Pitch changed his life, Hiccup changed his life. His mother changed his life and ruined it with his father. Other people changed his life, always. Right?

Then he bit his lip, allowing the gears to turn in his head. It was his life and he was the one to control it. He was the one that brought in those who had changed his life. His parents might have been forced into his life, but every other person he allowed in. He accepted Pitch's help, he stuck with Tooth and Aster during almost everything, and he was the one to walk up to Hiccup all those years ago. Nobody else had changed his life except for himself. And nobody was going to change it for him now. He had to take matters into his own hands, find his own white picket fence family.

The white haired boy nodded. "I want to change it."

"Good." Aster smiled at him, leaning over to ruffle his hair. It seemed like only yesterday he was helping him get sugarless gum out of his once chocolate brown locks. And now, he was all grown up, getting his own gum out of his own hair. "I'm proud."

Jack gave him a smile back and stood up. "Onyx is following me. Can you buy me some time so I can at least go see Hiccup at the high school?"

"I'll try." He answered and walked out the front door.

Onyx was small for her age but she was dark; dark hair, dark clothes, dark eyes. It was hard to spot her sometimes yet still easy during the day. A few minutes passed before he saw a small figure in the shadows move. Jack had used the back door and she clearly knew it. With a slight jog, Aster began approaching her, his eyes narrowing to a glare with every step. Her eyes darted back and forth from him to the house. When she saw the familiar blue sweatshirt, she sprinted as fast as she could. Aster did the same and jumped, pinning her to the ground.

He screamed and yelled in her face, doing everything in his power to keep the attention on him so she wouldn't see the direction in which Jack took. Onyx was very good at that; knowing where one would go based on where they placed their feet. It was almost as if she had the entire city mapped out in her head. Every alleyway, every fence, every little place in the town was in the palm of her little hands.

Jack looked back a final time and bolted for the high school. He stripped himself of his hoodie and wrapped it around his waist, picking a hat off a child that was walking home from a baseball game. Tooth taught him that; how to camouflage yourself without anyone noticing. It proved very useful when he was chased out of stores and tracked down by police.

The way the school was set up was rather odd. Almost every school in that city was set up the same way. The building was placed in the middle of the forest; clearings around it that served as eating areas and sports fields littered the tree infested hilltop. A single street went to it through a small neighborhood as well as a few paths through the forest.

Jack chuckled as he nimbly climbed up through the brush, pushing a few branches here and there, and finally stopping near the parking lot. His eyes landed on the brunet that sat hardly a pinecone throw away. He gripped his chest and stared. His mouth opened but no sound came out. The other seemed to be looking for someone or something, almost desperately. When his green eyes began to search over toward the trees, Jack hid in the bush, staring. He wanted "no" he _needed _to get to him.

Hiccup didn't even bother to sigh or roll his eyes as he stood up and walked with heavy weight down the street. Finally, Jack reached out and got ready to call for him when he felt something strong grab him, pulling him back to the ground by his throat.

The teen coughed as he hit the ground hard. His head pounced off the leafs and rocks and his eyes opened slowly to see Red staring down at him disapprovingly. He was caught. He was going to be punished. The tears in his eyes made it hard for him to see the figure coming into his sight.

"I'm very disappointed."

That voice—the figure was Pitch.

A choked sob came from Jack's beaten throat.

* * *

><p>AN: Oh man, you guys. Some serious stuffs. -
ADAM**

Reviews = Motivation = Chapters

29. Cars

**A/N: Oh man. Chapter 29. We're almost through here. Then off to two more. I was planning on this being a trilogy if I got 300 reviews. And I don't mean 'can't wait for the next chapter' reviews or 'good chapter' reviews. No, I'm only counting the reviews that explain your favorite parts of the chapter and what could be improved. So, tell me in the reviews: what was your favorite part of this chapter? What was your favorite chapter in the whole fic? **

* * *

><p>"You have betrayed your family."<p>

Red was the strongest of them all. Almost everyday, he would walk up to every member of their little family and bend a metal pipe so much that it'd break in two. So, when he threw Jack onto the cement ground of their 'home', it was no surprise how much it hurt. The man could throw a cotton ball at a bouncy house and it'd destroy both soft things.

Everything was dark as Onyx shut the door behind her. Red's heavy breathing gave away his location in the room and Pitch's eyes shown through the darkness, glaring at the teen like there was nothing they hated more. And somewhere close to him was another man, another member of this twisted bunch. It sounded like he was tied just as Jack was, a cloth or something tied around his mouth so all that came out was jumbled muffles.

"You weren't going to look back, were you?" Pitch asked, ignoring the fighting of the tied man just a little ways away from them all. "You were going to leave and live with another."

"No, I wasn't!" Jack pleaded. Tears ran down his face as every sick thought that Pitch could come up with popped to his mind. Was he to die or worse? "I-I just wanted to talk to him! I-I-"

"You were to stay with him for just a few days until we got what we needed. There was no need to talk to him or be with him or even look at him. You did your job. And now, you must go on to another. That is

how it works."

The white haired teen glared at the dark man, able to make out his frame in the darkness now. He didn't have much else to say but let out a small cry as he was struck hard across the face. "What was he to you?"

"S-stop!" Jack screamed as another slap practically broke his jaw.

"What was he?" It was a wonder how Pitch managed to keep his voice even and smooth.

There was no guilt in his eyes as he continued to abuse the other's once beautiful face. He didn't falter as the teen begged for him to stop, his tears running down and soaking his clothes. The man continued asking the same question, waiting for an answer that he liked. He ignored all the 'stop's and 'it hurts's. He ignored the blood running down from Jack's nose and cheeks. Pitch then noticed he hadn't clipped his nails in a while and began using it to his advantage.

The tied and muffling man not too far away began screaming out through the tape and cloths Red had placed around his mouth. Finally, he managed to get the first layer of tape off and the rest just bent to his bidding. Using his chin to push them down, he glared at Pitch, making his identity known as he screamed.

"It was me!" Aster shouted. "He was that kid I was supposed to kill!"

By the time he had spoken, Jack was already on the ground, curled up. His snow white hair with brown roots was now stained red and stuck to his face. He looked over at him through his good eye, now making out his frame.

'_Bunnyâ€¦|_'

Pitch sat up and snapped his fingers. Onyx obeyed the nearly silent command and flipped on the lights, almost burning Jack's wondrous blue eyes. "What was that, little Aster?"

A clipped tongue to stay forever silent, a severed limb to stay forever marked. There were so many punishments that Aster couldn't count them on his fingers or his toes. He silently stared at the leader of their thieving family and rethought over what he said. How could he twist that around to cover it up? But then his eyes trailed down at Jack who lay broken, bruised, and torn on the ground. He had taken care of the young adult since he was a tiny child.

He had to continue.

"Tha' Hiccup kidâ€¦|" Aster swallowed, looking back up at Pitch. "that Jack was followin' around. He was that kid I was supposed to kill that day. With his mother."

The dark haired man nodded with a sinister smirk, seeming to remember. "Ahh, yes. Your first kills. Or rather, kill." He shook his head disapprovingly. "Such a shame. You'll have to finish the job."

"No." He said firmly. His plan was going in all different directions. First, he just wanted Pitch's attention. And now, he's sending a kid to the grave before his time. It truly was a mess that he wasn't sure how to clean up. "I'm not killin' anyone anymore. I'm not your plaything anymore, mate. I'm my own person."

Pitch snapped his fingers and Red obeyed his almost silent command. With a thick fist, the bulking man slammed his knuckles into Aster's jaw, just about breaking it. The Australian let out a loud groan and tried his hardest to stay on his knees. Jack screamed at him to stop as he continued landing blows all over the other; the back of his head, his neck, his chest, his back. Blood began coating him and dripped down onto the floor.

Onyx watched silently and emotionlessly from the main light switch. She watched as the teen began trying to crawl over to Aster to try and get Red to stop. But it only made things worse for himself. Red slapped Jack away and continued attacking the once great member of the family.

It only stopped when Pitch snapped his fingers one last time. Red obeyed like a dog to a whistle and stood by his leader, staring down at the two bloodied underlings with such fury, it was a surprise they weren't melting.

"You'll stay here then and think about what you've done." Pitch said and turned, ruffling Onyx's hair as she opened the door. "Six hours."

And with that, the door was closed and they were alone. Jack looked up at Aster with a worried look, coughing slightly. "Six hours?"

"That's how much time we've got left." He answered, spitting out a tooth a little ways. "When he gets back, he's gonna kill us."

His breathing became heavier and a bit faster. He looked away with wide eyes. He was only eighteen years old. Hardly anyone knew his story. There was a slim chance he was going to be remembered. He had never been married, never made love, and more importantly, never got the chance to tell Hiccup his true feelings.

Jack could just imagine him now; getting married, having children, forgetting him like he was just a pebble in his shoe. It made it all the more worse. He was going to die and Hiccup would never know. Then he began to wonderâ€¦would he even care? Would he even come to see him in his casket, laying there peacefully? Or would there even _be _a funeral? Maybe Pitch was just going to throw them both into a ditch and cover them up.

After all those years of saying that Jack was just like a son to him, he never once thought of Pitch like a father. If anything, Aster was more of a father. If Pitch had it his way, the teen would stay in his room, laying there on newspapers and old clothes at all times. But Aster would not have that. No, Aster made sure that Jack had some pleasures in this life; trips to get ice cream, days at the movie theater, nights in an actual bed. He could never forget the feeling of those silk and cotton sheets, the plush mattress, the down feather pillows that molded in with his head. Most of all, he could never

forget the way Aster held him that very same night in his sleep. Like a parent cradling his weeping child. And now, they sat there together, bloody and waiting to be slaughtered.

"Isâ€|" Jack began and swallowed back his tears. "is it going to be quick?" Keeping back his tears did nothing to alter his voice. It still shook with fear.

Aster frowned. "I don't know."

They sat there in silence for what seemed like hours. The eldest was the only one to actually look up at the clock high up on the wall. After a half hour, there was banging on the door. The teen sat up with a gasp, both bodies tensing as they waited for Red and Pitch and Onyx to come through.

The banging continued and was soon followed by a string of high pitched 'ow's and grunts. Aster's eyes lightened up as he stared at the door, a small smile tickling his lips.

"Anna?" He whispered.

"Anna?" Jack asked, turning to look at him.

Sure enough, Tooth came bursting in, the door and herself falling to the ground with a loud and echoing thump. She sighed as she stood up and brushed herself off, grabbing a knife that she had strapped to her belt.

As she cut off the ropes that were tied around their wrists and ankles, she didn't say much. She sent them a smile every few seconds until their heads turned and their eyebrows raised.

"I heard what was going on. Decided to come rescue my favorite boys." Tooth said happily. "But we kind of have to hurry."

"Why?" Jack asked, standing up as he rubbed his wrist. "What's going on?"

Her smile began to falter for a moment before it went right back up. "Bad things." She whispered, patting his cheek.

* * *

><p>Toothless was an annoying dog. Every time he heard a car drive by, he'd bark. Every time a pin dropped on the floor, he barked. If everything was silent and someone all the way on the other side of the street opened or closed a door, he'd go ballistic.<p>

The bottom of window frames were scratched up from the years of him jumping up against them. You could see the many times they had to repaint the walls around the front door. But whenever the black lab had to go out, he just sat there. Silent. The one time it was okay for him to bark and he didn't make a sound, not even while he was sitting down.

His choice of how to go out would change. Sometimes, he liked just exploring the backyard; scaring squirrels and chasing chipmunks. Other times, he liked to walk around down streets and sniff every blade of grass that was new.

So, Toothless silently walked out of his master's bedroom and took his place by the front door. He stared at where the brunet's groans came from and let out a groan of his own, his tail wagging when he saw him sleepily walk over to him. Hiccup yawned, keeping Jack's sweatshirt close to him as he hooked the dog up to his leash. As soon as the door opened just a crack, Toothless pushed it the rest of the way with his nose. He practically dragged his human down the steps and onto the street, quickly waking him up.

"Jeezum, Toothless! Calm down!" Hiccup exclaimed in a soft yell. He pulled back on the leash lightly, making sure not to hurt his best friend but made sure it was just enough for him to know that he had to stay close.

The only light on the streets that night came from the street lights. The moon was new and nowhere to be seen as the fifteen year old pulled on the sweatshirt, shivering at the cold breeze that blew past. He stopped and flipped the hood onto his head, watching as Toothless sniffed a fire hydrant rather thoroughly. Crossing his arms, he noticed a dark van come around the corner. All the things he learned from horror movies crossed his mind and he turned away.

'_Nobody is going to come out and get meâ€|Nobody is going to come out and get meâ€|_' He thought to himself over and over.

His heartbeat raced as the van drove closer. He got himself ready to fight as it passed by him. But it was no good, the van continued to drive on into the night. Hiccup let out a slight chuckle at his own foolishness.

"This is real life, not a horror movie." He told himself.

And when another car came around the corner, he allowed himself to relax. He even scuffed it off and shrugged his shoulders back. As he did, the car stopped right by him, a man dressed in complete red stepping out. His mask gave the brunet a slight heart attack as he watched and visions clouded his eyes.

Falling lemon drops.

A colorful mask with egg shapes.

His mother covered in blood.

Hiccup gasped and stepped back as the man in red came closer, cutting Toothless' leash in half before grabbing the thin teen with his large hands. He went to scream for help but was cut off as the man turned, causing the boy to slam his head against a lamp post, knocking him out.

The black lab barked and barked, biting and ripping the bottom of his master's hoodie. As the piece of blue fabric floated down to the ground, it was too late. Hiccup and the man in red were already in the car and down the road.

* * *

><p>AN: I really like the name Anna. And Elizabeth...I blame

Bioshock Infinite. - ADAM**

Reviews = Motivation = Chapters

30. Races

A/N: Again, as always, sorry for the long wait. I've been having so many ideas, most of them...not so good. I have been working on many things as well such as my Toothless cosplays, my bioshock cosplays, and a few other fics. I've been planning on getting my Big Four fic all up and running again but I've also got another fic in mind which...is kind of a bad idea. Anyway, on with the short chapter!

* * *

><p>It was very hard to open his right eye, the feeling of something crusted over made him panic slightly. He could feel it coming from his temple to his shoulder. The parts that were touched on his shirt were stiff against his skin. It was blood that had soaked his neck and hair, drying up rather quickly. Hiccup tried to open his other eye, just barely making out his surroundings.<p>

A lighter going off next to him showed the man in red; his eyes hallow and uncaring, almost soul sucking. Up in the front was a short girl, maybe around his age with black hair, her fingers twiddling. And then, behind the steering wheel, he saw a man that gave him shivers to the bone. It might have been a trick of the light when he looked at his skin and swore it was gray. But his low chuckle wasn't a trick of any kind and forced Hiccup's hairs to stand on end.

"Finally awake, I see." Ugh, that voice. It made every cell in his blood stream run cold. "You've been out for quite a while. "

Hiccup tried his best not to visibly shake. Though, as the gray skinned man spoke, he couldn't help but let his fingers behind him tremble. He took a deep, silent breath as he prepared to speak. "Where am I? Where are you taking me?"

None of them spoke but their smirks could be felt and Hiccup bit his lip as he tried to calm the cold stone that formed in his chest. He began fearing the worst, as many would do at times like this. It's very strangeâ€|one would say that they would think of how to get out of such a situation. But if it ever actually came down to it, they would be thinking of the worst things in the world.

Hiccup leaned back and kept his eyes closed, imagining all the horrible things that could be done to him. Were they going to tie him up to a bed and use them for their personal pleasures? Maybe they were going to chain his wrists to a wall and have him sit there for the rest of his days. He imagined beatings and shootings and drowning slowly and painfully. His heart raced as he imagined his father finding him in a morgue and crying at the sense that the man was now alone. Cold sweat beaded down his skin as he thought of the type of casket they were going to put him in if they ever were to find his body.

The ride seemed to go on forever; a right turn here, a left turn

there, straight for hours then a roundabout. The best thing for him, he guessed, was to stay still. Don't struggle. Struggling will only cause horrible, horrible bruising. Maybe caused with the butt end of a gun.

Did they even have a gun? If they did, why weren't they using it? What good was it to them to keep him alive right now? Maybe they were going to use him as a pleasure toy. He shuddered at the thought and forced his eyes open, biting his lip as not to groan when he felt his eyelids pull apart from each other.

Gods, what was going on? From what he knew, he never really made this bad of enemies. Sure, a few bullies at school, but nothing like this. He never did anything to make others want to kidnap him, did he? Maybe this was a mistake. Yeah, a misunderstanding. It must have been. Hiccup didn't know any of them. He had never seen them before and they had never seen him.

'_Alright, Hiccup, stay calm._' The brunet told himself. '_Your father is a cop. He'll come save you. Yes. Dad. He'll save me._' His thoughts slowly turned toward Toothless and where that poor dog would be. Would he be chasing after the car? Did they kill him?

"You being here wasn't supposed to happen, you know." The man driving said, his calm voice chilling him even more. "You weren't supposed to live this long." His heart dropped into the cold pit that was his stomach.

"Seeâ€|you were supposed to die long ago. With your mother, of course, it would have been a lovely funeral. Very symmetrical, indeed. One casket on one side, another across from it, oh, it would have been beautiful." The man nodded. How he was going about this all was terrifying. Speaking of funerals in such a manner, he felt every part of his body go numb. "Sadly, you weren'tâ€|.what is the phrase? 'Put down' properly."

Hiccup looked out the window, watching the street lights flickering and people out walking around. If only they would look up. If only they knew how out of place he was in the car. "W-what do you mean by that?" He whispered, his attempts to not let his voice falter failing.

"I mean, little mouse, that the man that was meant to kill you didn't do his job properly. And now, I'm sorry to say, that your life is at it's end."

He couldn't help the tears that began to form on his eyelids. The blood that had dried and crusted on his lashes began softening until they finally poured over and down his cheeks. A strange mixture of blood and tears that made him look much like a horror movie ghost.

Nobody could blame him, his life was just about to start. He was going to graduate next year and go to college. He was going to find someone and get married, start a family in a large house. He was slowly going to get old and hold his lover's hand as they sat together on a porch swing. Everything was going to be good, his life was going to be terrific with amazing moments that would be etched into the stones of time. It had to be.

His face flickered back at him from the window as he continued to look out. He could still see light in those green eyes of his and it made him wonder how much longer he would have that light. Minutesâ€¦hoursâ€¦weeksâ€¦by the looks of them, they would torture him to death, no doubt.

When he finally looked beyond his reflection, he saw that it was lightly snowing outside. It would bounce off the window and fall to the ground where it softly landed, joining the others that had done the same or had just fallen. It reminded him of that one day in his backyard and he stared up at the sky, hearing the voice in the back of his mind.

'_â€¦I like your dragonâ€¦|_'

His face softened, allowing the tears to flow more and more, soon staining his shirt without him realizing. The comfort in that voiceâ€¦he knew that voice. He remembered where it came from and it relaxed his body.

Hiccup parted his lips as he stared out the window and up to the sky. "Jackâ€¦" He whispered softly, almost pleadingly. Hoping that somehow, someday, the white haired boy would have heard it and come to help.

* * *

><p>"Go faster!"<p>

"I'm going as fast as I-"

"Well go even faster than you already can!"

"Jackson! Sit back in your seat!"

"Ugh! Fine!"

The fight was worse than any family road trip anyone would ever take. Jack had, before being told by Tooth to sit down, been standing, pointing down certain roads and yelling at Aster to drive faster. Truthfully, between the three of them, Aster was the best at driving. It seemed to be a natural talent like painting and math. He flawlessly swerved threw streets, passed through stop signs, and even drove around a family walking to another house.

The fighting was worse than that of a family taking a long road trip. There were many shouts of 'go faster' and 'you better fucking hurry' and also 'I'm going as fast as I can', 'well it's not good enough, go faster', 'Jackson Frost, you better sit back down before I flick your nose'. If anyone else were to be in the car, they would have either felt the need to put in their two cents or open the door, tuck in and roll out into the sidewalk.

Jack's heart sped up as they turned onto Hiccup's street. His eyes went wide and he had hoped to see that his house lights were still on, that he was still in bed, curled up, blanket all around his head and a bit past his chin. But as they turned, his heart stopped and dropped. There, in the middle of the road, stood a very familiar dog, his leash loose behind him as he barked and growled at the coming car.

"Stop!" He shouted and slammed forward as Aster stomped his foot on the breaks.

Tooth hissed and put a hand to her heart, feeling it press against her palm with such ease, she began wondering if she was holding it. "What in the worldâ€|" She breathed out, watching the teen jump out of the car.

No matter how loud she screamed and told him to get back in the car, we don't know where that dog has been, Jack continued his slow walk toward the canine, his hand slightly outstretched.

"Hey, there, Toothlessâ€|" He whispered, trying to calm the growling dog. "Where's Hiccup?" Another growl, his lip twitching upward more. "Hey, it's okayâ€|I'm here to help. We're all here to help get him home and safe."

Toothless' lip slowly came down and he pressed his nose up into Jack's hand, sniffing it thoroughly before biting the end of his sleeve. His breath hitched in his throat as the black lab's teeth brushed against his wrist and began dragging him to a lamppost. As they stopped, he let go of the teen's sweatshirt and whimpered, looking up at a spot on the pole that was anything but comforting.

There, surrounded by snowflakes, was caked blood. Any flake that were to touch it was instantly absorbed and made Jack's heart stop and sink like a cold stone. He became deaf to the world, the sounds of Tooth and Aster running up to him and asking what was wrong never reaching his ears. Not until he saw the Australian's hand reach up and touch the red spot on the metal post.

"It was Red. He was here." He whispered, chipping off some of the blood and looking it over in his hands. "It's his mark, lettin' other gangs know not to mess with 'em."

The eighteen year old nodded and looked up at him, his eyes still holding that sense of fear and horror they had when he first saw the blood. "Where?" He whispered. "Where did they take him?"

"North Bridge Road." Tooth said, all emotion drained from her voice and face as both boys looked at her. "Pitch. And Red, they take most of the hostages and victims to North Bridge Road. As the name says, there is a bridge on that road. The cavern bellow is deep and the water can get so high, they close the bridge off due to flooding."

She took a deep breath, tears coming to the corners of her eyes. Aster frowned at the sight and nodded as she continued. "None of us wanted to let you in on it, Jack, because we didn't want you involved with something like NorthBridge." She turned to him. "If there was any better place to dump a body, it would be there. Nobody would ever know."

The fear and terror only grew inside of him. He felt himself take a deep, shaky breath, his eyes widening as he stumbled backward slightly. "H-how far is it from here?"

"'Bout a half hour but it doesn' matter." Aster shook his head with a

sigh. "By the time we get to him, we wouldn't be able to fight them all off. For starters, none of us has weapons."

And that's when the sound of car doors closing rang in Jack's ears. It was equal a sound to that of a choir of angels singing from above. He turned and saw Hiccup's father, Stoick, and his working partner, Gobber, whom he remembered from his friend's midnight rambles. If anyone would want him back more than him, it was that man with the overly large beard. Ignoring the white hot sting the cold snow and ground gave off on his bare feet, he ran up to them.

Gobber was the first to notice the dirty, stained boy; his skin as white as his hair and his eyes as bright but also as fearful as a child who was left alone in the dark. He patted his life long friend's shoulder, nodding toward the teenager when he looked toward him. Stoick turned and glared at the unwelcomed guest, growling when he talked.

"What are you doing here?" He hissed. "I told you to stay away from my so-"

"Pitch has him." Jack could have said that Hiccup was in a car accident or that he had lost his leg or that he had simply died. Nothing could have given them a greater look of fear than what was presented.

Stoick stood, staring at the teen for a few seconds as he took it all in. Slowly, he shook his head and his stare turned into a vengeful glare. "You did this. You put him in this dang-"

"Look, are we going to sit here and point fingers or are we going to go get him?" He glared back at him twice as hard. This blame game wasn't getting them anywhere.

Aster nodded and walked toward them. "We know where he is takin' him. Jus' follow us and we should be able to get to him in time."

Gobber nodded in agreement and shot a smile down at Jack before grabbing his friend's shoulder, pulling him back to the car. But Stoick didn't stop his glaring. "I swear, if we find him dead, I will personally hang you."

"If it comes to that, I would have beaten you to it."

* * *

><p>AN: Me and my boyfriend are having a contest to see who can make the other hate them by using our fics. Go check out Ilmazzobro's fics to see who would hate who more through the lovely art of shipping. - ADAM**

Reviews = Motivation = Chapters

31. Rocks

**A/N: I am so sorry for the longest wait in forever on this one. So many things were happening all at once, I lost my motivation to write, even when I started new stuff(which is weird because that usually starts it up). Only two more chapters to go. And now that I

look it over...it was meant to be so different. It was meant to be more romantic, more engaging, more understanding. My writing style and I think my skill has improved since the last chapter. And even while I was writing this. You can tell, I think, that it's changed. Before the sudden lost of interest, I had started this chapter. I just now finished it within the last two days with so much pushing on doing it. I know if I push, I'll be able to write more and write better. Anyway, here is the chapter.**

* * *

><p>The drive there was surprisingly quiet. Jack sat between Tooth and Aster in the back of Stoick's car, his fingers tapping his knees and tangling up on themselves. He curled his lips into his mouth as he hold back demands of going faster than this. What if Hiccup was already there, drowning in the rushing, cold waters? And when they got there, it would seem as if they had gotten there first. No. That's not going to happen. He took a deep breath and thought it through. They were going to get there, they were going to get Hiccup, they were going to leave, and things were going to go back to normal.<p>

Aster sighed as he placed a hand on Jack's shoulder, frowning. The tension that came off him filled the entire car and put everyone on edge. Well, more so than they already were. The whole situation would put anyone on edge and it was a surprise there was no screaming. But there were nasty looks being passed around.

Every so often, Stoick would glance at his rear view mirror and glare at the reflection of Jack. The teen could feel every look he gave him but now wasn't a good time to pick a fight. They all needed to focus on the job at hand. After all this was over, that was when it was time to fight. For now, though, Jack balled his hands into fists and pressed them into his knees.

Gobber, who sat in the passenger's seat, would try to calm the tension with soft gestures and pleading eyes for a night of peace. But that's clearly not what was going to be happening.

"Why did you have to come back?" Stoick growled, glancing into the rear view mirror to glare at Jack. "Why did you have to put him in such danger?"

Jack turned from his window to the mirror, glaring just as hard back. "It's not like I asked for him to be in danger." He hissed under his breath.

"You run with a dangerous crowd. Why risk it in the first place?"

"Because he's my friend!" Jack nearly stood up. "Because he's the one that even remotely seemed to care about me!"

"Enough!" Gobber called out and glared at both of them. "Let's not lose ourselves here! We need to focus on Hiccup, not your stupid hate for each other."

He turned in his seat after the two of them sighed and groaned, looking out the windows once more. "You may kill each other after we find him." He whispered under his breath, gaining him Jack's foot

kicking the back of his seat.

The snow fell a bit faster the closer they seemed to come to North Bridge Road. Tooth gripped her knees and decided to stare at the back of Gobber's seat. Aster rubbed her shoulder and glanced at Jack, watching him impatiently bounce his leg as he stared out the window. He could see the fury in the young man's eyes, could hear him gritting his teeth behind his closed lips. And as they turned down the road, he started to thank whatever higher power there was that the only weapon, a pistol, was held in between Stoick's belt and pants. If it had been any place else in the car, he knew the teen would have taken it and shot Pitch the moment they locked eyes. He didn't blame him either.

North Bridge Road was long and narrow, the only light coming from the full moon in the sky. Hardly anyone ever took this road since it was a one way street, but the tire tracks that they followed, slowly being covered in the snow, showed otherwise. By the looks of them, they weren't that far ahead. Jack sat up as they continued, turning down the slight bend. He grabbed the handle on the inside of the door, getting ready to jump out as soon as he saw the brunet. He saw the whole thing plan out in his head; as soon as they drove up he was going to jump out of the car and run over, giving a swift kick to Pitch's stomach and a hard fist blow to the side of Onyx's head. By then, the others would be out of the car and Stoick would have shot Red. In his little perfect world, they'd take Hiccup home and warm him up while Stoick and Gobber arrested the three, putting them away forever. Him, Tooth, and Aster would be excused from their crimes and would be free to live normal lives. Yes—Jack could see the normal life he'd be leading after that night.

Stoick gasped and caused everyone to turn their attention to the windshield. There, just in front of them was the bridge. A van stood there with Onyx sitting on top, Red holding Hiccup over the side, and in between was Pitch, smirking as he turned to the car. Jack could feel his blood run cold and he quickly opened the car door, falling out and tumbling over the ice and snow.

Aster glared and ran out. "Pitch, you sonuvabitch, I'll knock ya out so hard-!"

"Uh, uh, ah!" Pitch said with his devilish smirk, waving his finger slightly before pointing to Red, who now was getting ready to push over the bundle of rocks that were tied to Hiccup's feet. "I wouldn't come any closer if I were you."

Everyone stopped in their tracks save for Onyx who jumped down, staring up at everyone as she made her way over to them. Tooth glared at her, baring her teeth slightly like a rabid monkey about to attack. Aster glanced at the now stiff as a board Hiccup before completely fixating his eyes on Pitch. Stoick and Gobber just stared at the poor brunet, listening to him pant and whimper, begging to be set down properly.

Jack felt a knot twist in his stomach as he watched his friend, the one he loved, dangling over the edge of the bridge. The waters were frozen down below and it wouldn't take long for him to die of hypothermia. He had fallen into frozen waters once when he was very small, hardly old enough to even think up a swear. His parents were closing their summer lodge and he wandered onto the ice sheeted lake

thinking it was safe. Not a minute later, he had fallen in and broke a leg while doing it. Water that cold stings, burns. And he wasn't even up past his chest in the stuff. Being completely submerged in it, letting it fill your lungsâ€”one of the worst deaths you could possibly have.

"Pitchâ€”let him go." Jack said gently, hoping that it would ease him out of this crazy act. "Pleaseâ€”just let him go." His leg twitched as he thought about kicking him in the stomach once more.

Pitch shook his head. "Oh, my little Jackson. You just don't understand, do you?" He lowly laughed, grinning with his shark like teeth. "How many times must I tell you? He was never suppose to live this long! He was suppose to die with his mother. He is a witness; a mess we must clean up."

Stoick glared. This was the man, the man that killed his wife, his love. The man that tried to kill his son but left him in a more horrible state of being, he thought. All he could do as he stared at him, gun pointed forward, aimed perfectly at the spot between his eyebrows, was think about the moments this dark excuse for a human stole from them.

First days at school were horrible for both of them. Not only fathers of other children were around, but mothers as well and they always looked at them with great pity. Hiccup spent most of his days alone at the playground, reading, and most of his nights waking up from terrors he couldn't escape from. Stoick tried his hardest to make sure nothing of the past was ever brought up in fear of the panic attacks his son often had when he thought to hard about them. All those happy moments his family shared were hidden in a box for the longest time, and it was all thanks to this _creature_ in front of him, laughing as he pointed out his own gun.

"Stoick, chief of police, you'd never shoot me." Pitch chuckled, pointing his gun with so much confidence, it was almost sickening to everyone else. "Shoot me, and Red here will drop your son into a cold death."

Aster froze, only his eyes moving as he looked at the large man. His lips hardly moved as he spoke. "He means it. He'll do it with no secon' thoughts."

Hiccup panted as cold sweat dripped down the sides of his face and arms. The snow had lightened up but he felt like there was no snow at all. Like it was summer and he was standing right in the sun's rays. Slowly, trying to make sure he wasn't making sudden moves, he turned his head and watched his father place the gun at his feet, holding his hands up. The man glanced at the brunet then back at Pitch. Then back at the brunet and stared at him with wide, worried eyes.

He couldn't help but mouth out for help from his father. But the only thing he could do was look back and forth from the evil creature in front of him and his son dangling from another man's arms. A small squeak escaped Hiccup's throat as he turned more around and saw Jack, frozen in fear and staring at him with so much worry and sorry in his face.

"Jackâ€”" His voice cracked as he whispered.

Jack nodded and licked his chapped lips quickly. "I'm here, Hic. Just don't panic." He whispered back.

A dark, amused chuckle came from Pitch as he looked the teens over. "Oh, this is wonderful. You've grown close to him, haven't you, my little snowflake?" He walked over to Red, patting his shoulder as he laughed. "This is just delightful! You fell in love with a doomed child!"

Aster's eye twitched at the sound of his laughter. Pitch wasn't know for laughing. He would smile from time to time and if he did, you would know how bad in a mood he was, how crazy he was thinking. Him laughingâ€|this wasn't going to end well. "Pitch, cut the shit an' let the kid go."

"You don't call the shots here, Aster. I do." His attention switched to the Australian and his voice became even more frightening. "You've always been trying to tell people what to do, thinking it's right without realizing how wrong you really are."

"See, this is what's going to happen; Red is going to drop the child, Stoick will be shot, his friend here will be shot, and then I'll consider allowing you three to live." He said, gesturing toward Tooth, Aster, and Jack. "Of course, you all would have to behave yourselves. You wouldn't be able to leave the territoryâ€|even to lead your own lives like I had let you do all these years."

"Lead our own lives?" Tooth laughed, making her sound like she was going insane. "You made thisâ€|this thing watch over us ever since you met us!" She pointed at Onyx who still stood in front of her, glaring warningly at her. "I haven't had one moment of peace and you call that leading our own lives?!"

Pitch chuckled a moment before his face fell, becoming serious as he thought things through. Suddenly, he waved his hand. "Red?" He asked, turning to the brute of a man. "Put him down on the bridge. He has so many stones around his ankles, he couldn't run if he tried. Besidesâ€|you have to help your sister."

Hell broke loose. Tooth finally took her chance and lunged at Onyx, pinning her down, knees to her shoulders as she brought her fists down to collide with the other's jaw bones. Aster began going after Pitch while Gobber and Stoick tried their hands at Red. Jack stood there watching as the three large men fought like walruses. There was a large hairy fist there, a short, stubby leg here. He was tempted to help any to all of them. His leg twitched as he looked at Aster and thought about kicking Pitch's legs from under him. Then he saw the gun Stoick had placed on the ground and thought about giving it to Tooth. When he looked up to look at more of the fighting, that's when he saw the poor brunet, standing there next to the bridge's railing, trying to untie the bags of rocks around his ankles.

Jack took off in a sprint toward him, his arms bumping and his feet burning from the snow hitting his bare skin. He could only imagine how Hiccup was feeling; only wearing a t-shirt, pajama bottoms, and socks. He didn't even need to say anything as he kneeled by him and tried his hardest to quickly untie him.

Hiccup's hands at this point were shaking, sparkling slightly with frost. His bottom jaw began bouncing against the top, his teeth

chattering in that annoying, cliché fashion. But he didn't care. He just wanted to get out of this. "H-how can you do this everyday with n-no shoes?" He chattered.

The older teen chuckled nervously, pushing away one out of three bags away from his feet. "I've been doing it since I was very young."

He nodded his head. To Hiccup, it seemed more like a reminder than a fact he had just learned. Not in the way Jack had said it, but more in the way he was thinking it. It was like déjà vu. Like all those times he heard the little boy's voice and whispered his friend's name in response. It was something he knew.

His fingers jumbled with the white haired boy's, brushing against his warm skin in hopes that it would make his hands work properly. Looking up, he saw Onyx kicking Tooth in the cheek and his father pounding his fists on the top of Red's head. It was almost satisfying to watch. He quickly looked back down and did the last few laces on the second bag, helping his friend push it to the side.

Something began bubbling up inside him as they started on the final bag. His tongue itched with words he felt needed to be said but he wasn't sure where to start. What was he supposed to say anyway? That he felt Jack was familiar? That he was cold? That they needed to hurry up before someone died? Finally, he drained himself of all thought and took a deep breath, letting out the first thing that came to mind as he looked into Jack's eyes.

"I like your dragon."

Jack's eyes became wide as he looked back at him. His hands stopped and Hiccup stood up straight. Maybe he was hearing things. Maybe it was just the wind blowing in his ears. Had he heard that right? "What?" Jack whispered.

As the brunet opened his mouth to repeat, another voice took his place. A much deeper, colder, harsher voice. And it screamed. "It must be done!"

Some say when you've been shot, you don't hear the gun go off. You don't even feel any pain until you look at the wound. So it made Hiccup wonder as he stared at Jack why he looked so alarmed, why he was moving so slow. Why his father screamed and why, when he blinked, he saw the sky and the air felt colder than normal. Only when he hit the ice bellow and he was under the waters, feeling it fill his lungs did he know. Only then did he look down and see the red dot on his shirt, a hole right in the middle of it.

Panic and shock as well as the cold kept him from moving. As he stared back up and saw a figure coming at him from above, he wondered if this is what ice cubes feel like before becoming ice cubes. He closed his eyes as he allowed ice to wrap around him, pulling him somewhere he wasn't sure of.

* * *

><p>AN: Those bastards. - ADAM**

Reviews = Motivation = Chapters

32. Kisses

****A/N:** And this, ladies and gentlemen, is the last chapter of Philophobia. I have to say, things took a completely different turn than I expected. Things were supposed to be very different; it was supposed to be longer, Hiccup and Jack were supposed to have more moments together. All in all, I think it came out a-okay. A lot of people seem to love it and yes, I will make a second edition to this. I will post a note on this fic the week before the sequel comes out. On my HiJack tumblr, snowingdragons, I will post more fics and one-shots as well as photo edits, cosplay pictures, and more. And, I hope to make an Archive of Our Own account by the same name 'snowingdragons'. This Halloween, I will post a new fic, a fantasy HiJack fic, on here, tumblr, and AO3. Until then, happy halloween and stay safe.**

* * *

><p>His head swayed and it was almost like he was in some sort of lucid dream. Every part of his body didn't feel right. It felt almost as if he wasn't moving it but something else that read his mind was. He lifted his hand and stared at it, soon bringing it to his chest. A steady beep sounded next to him and it was scary how normal and comfortable he was.<p>

Slowly, his eyes adjusted and he saw the white plastic footboard, the stiff, crisp sheets, and the plain walls. A hospital room. He was in a hospital room. But that couldn't be. He was supposed to be dead, at the bottom of the river by now. Ice was suppose to surround him and take him to wherever his mother was taken to. There was no possible way he could have made it out and lived.

Hiccup sat up and hissed at the pain in his shoulder. It didn't matter how much morphine was bumping through his body, he still felt a slight sting from where he was shot. By Pitch. Oh gods, everyone was in such chaos. He felt his heart jump and his breathing become heavy. The steady beeping by his side raced and soon, a nurse came in through the door, he scrubs too tight for her figure.

"Jack!" He screamed when he saw the open door. "Jack! Dad!" He had to know they were okay. That they were safe just like how he was now.

"Mr. Haddock, you're going to have to lay back down and calm down. Your father and friends will be in here in a moment." The nurse said in that standard nurse voice that could make any forty year old feel worse about themselves.

The brunet stared at her and laid back down, following her orders without complain. "My dad and Jack, are they okay? Are they hurt any? What happened to them?"

She shook her head. "They are just fine. A few of them have a black eye. One of them a broken nose and arm."

He nodded. He wanted to continue asking her about them, but he figured he'd find out for himself. Instead, for now, he stared at her nimble fingers, watching her unwrap a needle and place a vile on top. She placed it into the iv and the vile began filling up with his

blood. At some point during the process of getting three small glass tubes filled with blood, his lip twitched and his tongue flicked with the most ridiculous question ever. He felt the strong urge to ask why he couldn't feel anything. But he decided against it, blaming the pain medication for his loopyness.

The nurse smiled and explained how they had to keep his father and Jack in different waiting rooms and they'd see him at different times. He had been out for about two days she said, patting his arm and changing the fluid bag out. She stayed with him for a moment until his food arrived on a plastic, plain tray. Setting it down with a smile, she patted his head and promised to be back soon with his father who was promised to see him first. Hiccup just simply watched her leave and close the door behind her.

In truth, he didn't want to see his father first. He wanted to talk to Jack. The brunet looked over the white and blue weaved bracelet on his wrist and smiled, happy and slightly surprised he still had it. He knew bits and pieces now. It was more like facts stored in filing cabinets than actual memories that he could revisit. He knew that Jack had given him this bracelet, that Jack was his first real friend. He knew that they used to crawl up the hill and stare at the stars. With a smile, he touched his lips softly with the tips of his fingers. Jack would kiss him sweetly before leaving the hill and helping him home.

'Because he cared about meâ€|' Hiccup thought to himself as his fingers curled into a small fist that dropped to his lap. There were still some blank spots; where he went to school, what Jack looked like at that age, what had happened to him, but he didn't care all too much. He had the basics and he could build things off that, learn things about that time.

Stoick walked in with a grin on his face, Gobber not too far behind. "Sonâ€|" He whispered roughly as if he had been coughing or screaming. Or arguing. "You've finally woken up."

"Hi dad." His was just as bad, if not worse. He could feel the cords in his throat tug down and scratch, his words coming out almost as if he had been strangled. "What've I missed?"

"Not too much." The large man shrugged and sat by his son's side, smiling. "Pitch and the others are locked up. I haveâ€|pardoned the two that helped us find you."

Hiccup sat up as straight as he could, staring into his father's eye which was bagged and black. "And Jack?" He whispered.

Gobber stepped forward before Stoick could speak. "Jack has also been pardoned from arrest. By me."

He nodded and looked up at his father, seeing the most disappointed, disgusted look on his face. It made him boil with words he wish he could say to him, like how Jack wasn't that bad of a guy and think about what his life has probably been. But he knew getting angry at him and yelling and screaming wasn't going to get him anywhere. If anything, it'd make matters worse.

They sat there for about a half an hour, talking as Hiccup nibbled on a few pieces of toast and sipped his soup. Everything seemed to taste

like a watered down version of the real thing or something different entirely but it was still food and he hadn't eaten in so long. Gobber told him the whole story of his rescue as his blood slowly stopped boiling and his face became a normal color other than beat red. He told him how Jack jumped in after him, breaking his arm and nose in the process, and carried him back up to the car. With it turned on and the heater cranked all the way up, he had stripped him of his shirt and pants and had tried to dry him and warm him at the same time. As he continued on with how they rushed to the hospital, Hiccup looked at his father, noticing how his face was turning red and his knuckles turned white. His lip was curled into his mouth which was now just a straight line. He was angry, but why?

When the nurse came in to give the brunet his medicine, Gobber smiled and helped Stoick to his feet. "We should let you rest. Isn't that right, Stoick?"

After a few grumbles and nods, the two left to sit out in the waiting room. The nurse smiled and injected his pain medicine into his iv. She didn't say much this time around, hardly even looking at him as she threw the needles away in an orange trash bag and asked him how he was feeling on a scale from one to ten. When he told her it was around a three, she smiled and jotted it down, saying that she'd send his friend in an hour, and left.

Hiccup sighed, staring up at the plain ceiling. Every thought in his mind began to sway but he didn't mind very much. He knew it was just the medicine. Slowly, he started to move his shoulder and twist his ankles. His body felt stiff and if he didn't move anything now, it would feel a lot worse later. So, he rolled his ankles in circles and curled his legs up so his knees pointed toward the ceiling. His shoulder moved back and forth, making him groan from the extreme discomfort. At one point, he even tried to stand up but voted against it when he tried to pick his head up and the room swayed worse than any boat he had ever been on.

A quick look at the clock showed that only about twenty minutes have passed. If he knew anything about hospitals it was that when they said they'd be right back, they actually meant they'd be back in about two to three hours. So he wasn't counting on anyone coming in for about another hour and forty-five minutes. He rolled his eyes and tried to fix on something to pass the time. He glanced at the machines next to him, staring at the lines and listening closely to the beeps. They were surprisingly comforting even if they could get annoying to everyone else in the room. He could imagine the actual beat of his heart thumping with the cold sound of the machine. It was an almost soothing thought and he closed his eyes, listening to both his heart beat and the monitor beeping.

To him, only a minute or two passed; his chest slowly rising and falling, his heart beating in his ears. But in real life, a lot more time had passed. Hearing the door open, Hiccup just laid there, not really wanting to open his eyes or take part in whatever was going to happen. So he kept his steady breathing and listened in to whoever had walked in. Light footsteps walked over to him and something sat in the chair next to his bed. As he finally decided to open his eyes, he felt a cold hand hold his.

"Heyâ€¦" Jack said softly, Hiccup's vision clearing up as he stared at him. The older of the two smiled and stroked the other's hand with

his thumb. "How are you feeling?"

He didn't really think about how he was feeling. All he could really do was stare at the large gauze on his nose and his other arm that was wrapped. "You broke your nose and arm" Hiccup whispered.

"Yeah." He chuckled and shrugged as best he could. "That's what happens when someone grabs your arm when you try and jump off a bridge."

"Someone grabbed your arm?"

Jack nodded. "Pitch. When you fell back after being shot, I went to jump in after you. He grabbed my arm and twisted it. It cracked, my nose hit the side of the bridge so hard that it cracked too. Finally, your dad swung at him and I fell in."

"Are you okay?" Hiccup leaned over with a hiss, lightly touching the cast with his hand. "Why'd you do it?"

The other only stared at him as if he was asking why grass was green. His heart began to beat faster than Hiccup's machine ever could and he slowly leaned down, closing his eyes as he felt their lips meet. For a moment, he thought that this was all just a daydream, that it wasn't really happening. But once he pulled away and saw Hiccup with eyes bigger than dinner plates, he knew it had happened.

Seconds turned to hours and even days in their minds as they stared at each other in silence. The heart monitor beeped louder and faster as Hiccup slowly leaned up, pressing his lips back against Jack's. For most of his life, his father always put such behavior down, saying that it was wrong, immoral, and it would ruin him forever to even see it let alone let it happen to him. Though, as Jack caressed his face with his good hand and their lips moved together as one, he wondered what was so bad about something that felt so good. So amazing.

Pulling apart to get some breath, both teens smiled at each other. With a chuckle, the oldest one placed a small kiss at the top of the other's forehead. "I've been waiting forever to do that."

"I know" Hiccup smiled happily, pulling him down into a hug. "Thank you for waiting."

* * *

><p>The rows and rows of screaming inmates were muffled in his small cell. The door was cast iron with only a small window near the top and an opening at the bottom for food. Pitch stared at the wall in front of him, his legs crossed as he sat on his bed. On the other side of that wall was Onyx and beyond that was Red. When he first found out about the arrangement, he couldn't help but laugh at their stupidity. Even now, as he looked over the tally marks that he and other inmates had done in the past, he couldn't stifle his chuckle. It echoed through the room horribly and seemed out of place among the muffled screams of others in their own cells.<p>

Right on time, the bottom opening in the door slid open, a tray of food and a bottle of water pouring from it. He smirked and stood,

swiftly walking to the small bared window. "You're ever so kind."

The guard on the other side just scuffed and rolled his eyes, continuing to slide trays and bottles under doors. Pitch smirked as he watched him pass. Once he was out of site, he looked down at the tray and bottle. Toast with rice and some chicken, a plastic spoon and knife sitting off to the side. As his smirk became a maddening smile, he sat down and ate peacefully yet quickly. His food out of the way, he began the slow and horrible process of sharpening the spoon into a fat blade. The guards would become suspicious if a knife, plastic or not, was missing. But a spoon was a completely different story.

* * *

><p>AN: Thank you for all your support! - ADAM**

Reviews = Motivation = Fics

End
file.